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OPINION METER
This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, what's your level of optimism that you will get your rebate for the 2011 tax year?

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BUSINESS

Economic outlook brightens after Americans bought more stuff last month.

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The world's military leaders are preparing for a new kind of Cold War in the Arctic.

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LIFE & STYLE

The Associated Press wins a Pulitzer Prize for investigative journalism.

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Fund files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy

NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees chair Bernadita Palacios and counsels Viola Alepuyo and Jeremy Coffey brief Senate and House members about the pension agency's filing in court of Chapter 11 bankruptcy to restructure the Fund's financial obligations, during a meeting yesterday afternoon on Capital Hill.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The NMI Retirement Fund, through its administrator Richard A. Villagomez, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy yesterday afternoon.

Attorney Braddock J. Huesman and the Boston law firm of Brown Rudnick, as proposed counsel for the Fund, filed the bankruptcy petition in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

According to court papers, the filing of the bankruptcy petition was made after special meetings of the Fund's board of trustees yesterday and on April 4.

Chapter 11 allows a debtor (in this case, the Fund) to enter into an agreement with creditors under which all or a part of the business continues. Chapter 11's objective is to adjust and reorganize a debt-

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Differing views on bankruptcy filing

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

While Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's administration said it "understands" and "supports" the NMI Retirement Fund's filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, some lawmakers were not as sympathetic about it. Some lawmakers also said the Fund had no other choice because the Executive Branch and the Legislature "failed" to do more.

RELATED NEWS
Fund contribution withdrawal bill now with governor.
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"Given his experiences in the banking industry, Gov. Fitial expressed his understanding to the trustees and assured them that he will continue to work closely with the Fund to come

See DIFFERING on Page 4

Fund to retirees: Don't panic!

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

- Pension program operation business-as-usual
- Bankruptcy counsel targets six-month reorganization
- 2 months pension, 2 months premiums for health and life insurance for retirees reserved in emergency account

Members of the NMI Retirement Fund board of trustees and its legal team, including a newly hired bankruptcy counsel, advised retirees and members of the Commonwealth pension agency not to panic in the wake of the Fund's Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing yesterday.

This came even as the board said that all payouts that would impact the Fund's assets will now depend on the decision of the bankruptcy court, which may freeze the plan's assets.

In a hastily called news briefing mid-afternoon yesterday at the Fund's conference room, board chair Bernardita Palacios said their goal in filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy is actually to preserve the Fund's ability to distribute payments beyond 2014, which is the projected lifespan of the program based on its current portfolio of only over $250 million.

She said the recent creation of a pension holding corpora-

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'Cut number of lawmakers but raise their salaries' PAGE 5
Public schools expect to end fiscal year with $5M deficit. PAGE 6

Local

Three-day environmental expo kicks off

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

About 400 fourth and fifth grade students from four elementary schools on Saipan arrived in droves at the American Memorial Park yesterday for the first day of the Environmental Expo hosted by the Division of Environmental Quality.

The students of Grace Christian Academy, and the Koblerville, Dandan, and Gregorio T. Camacho elementary schools learned about the various programs and projects of different agencies and organizations dealing with environmental issues from the 22 booths set up at the site.

Jihan Buniag, DEQ education and outreach coordinator, said the highlights of the expo included the Division of Fish and Wildlife booth, which brought one of its safety boats, and the Asia-Pacific Academy of Science, Education and Environmental Management with its whale vertebrae exhibit.

Other participating agencies and groups were Tan Holdings, Mariana Islands Nature Alliance, Saipan Seventh-Day Adventist Clinic, Public School System Special Education, Healthcare Corp.'s Non-Communicable Disease Bureau, Historic Preservation Office, the Youth Environmental Ambassadors, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The three-day expo, which is open from 8:30am to 2:30pm, is part of the celebration of Environmental Awareness Month this April, with the theme "My Air, Your Land, Their Sea, Our Environment," emphasizing the shared aspect of the environment.

Environmental engineer Emanuel Borja, who is the Environmental Awareness Month committee chair, said that they are pleased with the great turnout and expect more students to see the expo today and tomorrow.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Students listen to one of the presenters at the first day of the Environmental Expo, which opened at the American Memorial Park yesterday. The three-day expo is hosted by the Division of Environmental Quality in celebration of the Environmental Awareness Month.

"We also have a great set of presenters this year and that's what makes the expo a success," Borja told *Saipan Tribune*.

Some of the students who were at the expo yesterday have already written on the "Wish for the Environment" banner, which showed messages advising others on how they can help protect and save the environment.

The expo is particularly aimed at fourth and fifth graders as the expo is aligned with their learning benchmarks. "We hope that in the future, we can open the expo to more grade levels," Buniag said.

She also expressed hope that the students' visit will equip them with something they can share with their families and friends in school or in their homes.

"We want to provide the students with educational tools and help them become more aware about environmental issues. We hope to achieve that," she added.

Rotary moves Las Vegas Night to July

The Rotary Club of Saipan has decided to postpone its signature annual fundraiser, Las Vegas Night.

Club secretary Laila Boyer said yesterday at the Rotary's general membership meeting that the event, which was originally scheduled for May 5 for a Cinco de Mayo theme, has been moved to July after consideration of all necessary paperwork and other logistics issues.

Boyer noted that they plan to hold it on the second or third Saturday of July.

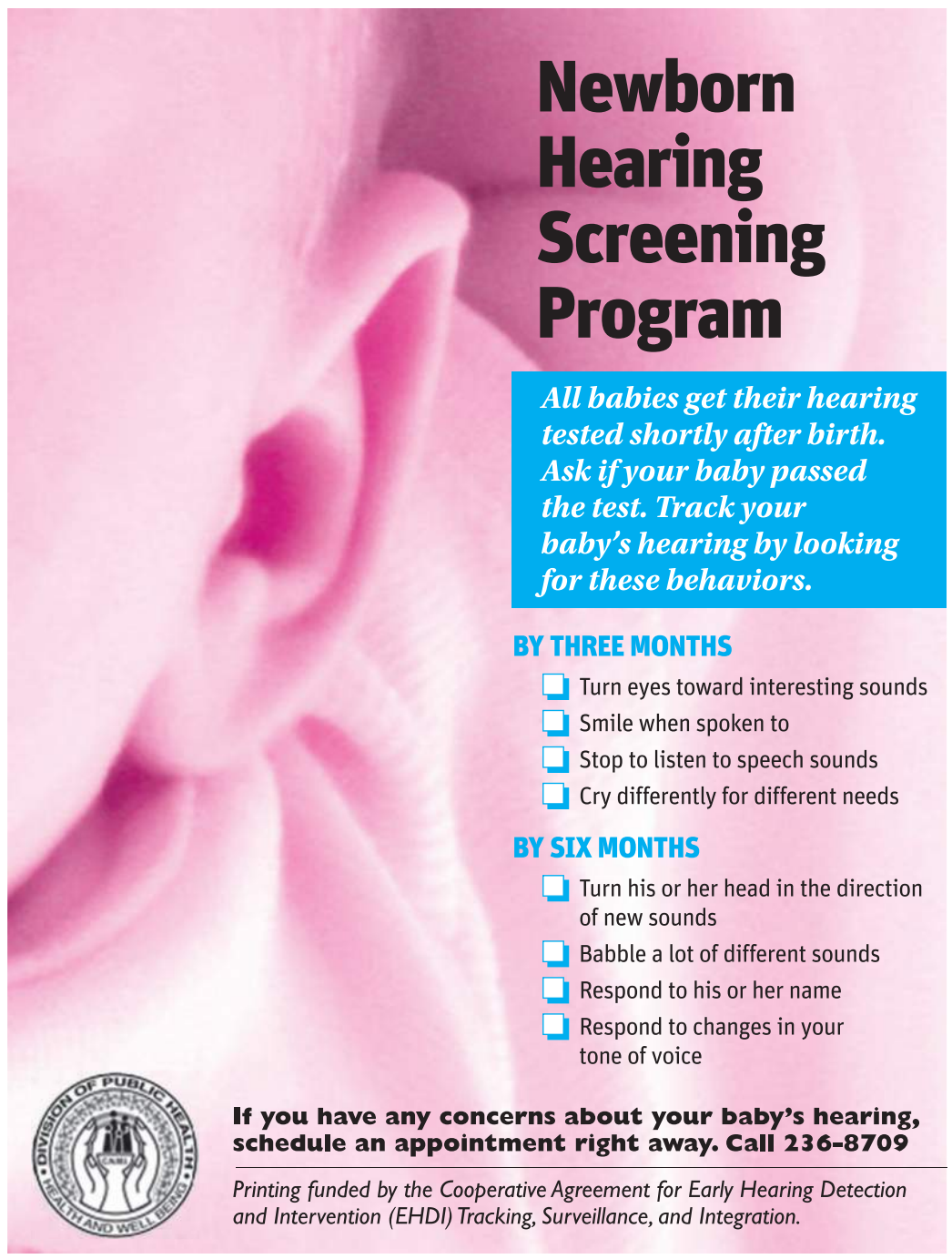
"We know July is vacation season but that's why we want to announce it early so the public will be advised," she added.

Boyer said the decision to move the event to summer is also timely so that the community will have another event to look forward to besides the Fourth of July festivities, which might ran for just a week instead of its usual monthlong celebration.

Rotarians will be selling the Las Vegas Night tickets for $5 per ticket or $20 per booklet for a chance to win a cash prize or a brand new car.

Proceeds from the event will go to the funds for the construction of a children's playground in Kagman.

For more information, email saipanrotary@gmail.com. ***(Clarissa V. David)***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HOUSE PASSES COMPROMISE VERSION OF HB 17-226

Fund contribution withdrawal bill now with governor

»Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing clouds bill's fate

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A bill allowing non-retired members of the NMI Retirement Fund's defined benefit plan to withdraw up to 50 percent of their contributions regardless of years of service and without penalty or the need for them to quit their job is now with Gov. Benigno R. Fitial. There's no telling yet whether the governor would immediately sign the bill in light of the Fund's filing of a Chapter 11 bankruptcy after the House of Representatives passed the measure yesterday.

Under the bill, the rest of the employee contributions to the Fund will be rolled over to the defined contribution plan.

By a vote of 13-6, the House passed the compromise version of House Bill 17-226 a day after the Senate passed the same measure.

Less than two hours later, the Fund board of trustees led by chair Bernadita C. Palacios, counsel Viola Alepuyo, and other officials met with lawmakers in the House chamber to announce the Fund's filing of Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

Fund officials also met with the governor. At 3pm, the Fund also held a news briefing on the bankruptcy filing.

Fund officials said the Chapter 11 bankruptcy is meant to restructure the pension agency's financial obligations, but the surprise announcement didn't sit well with some lawmakers. They told lawmakers that restructuring is a lot better than receivership and liquidation of assets, so that the pension agency can still exist. ***(See related stories on front page)***

Press secretary Angel Demapan, when asked for comment whether the governor would sign the bill, said that HB 17-226 "was just passed by the Legislature and is currently under legal review."

During the House session, members debated at length again the merits of the final version of Speaker Eli Cabrera's (R-Saipan) HB 17-226, which already spent almost seven months bouncing between the two chambers.

Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan) reiterated his concern that enacting this bill would accelerate the Fund's demise, and asked whether this is even considered in Fitial's proposed fiscal year 2013 budget.

House minority leader Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) echoed Dela Cruz's concerns, and cited three possible ways to help prolong the Fund's life expectancy beyond three years.

"We all know the casino bill is dead but there are initiatives that still need to get the required number of signatures [to be placed on the ballot]. Second, there's the pension obligation bond legislative initiative [which has yet to be passed]. Even if we have that in the November ballot, it would still take time [to float a bond]. Our credit rating…is not very good," he said.

Deleon Guerrero said one of the easiest ways to help the Fund is to reduce the tax rebates and earmark the difference to the Fund but only "to buy us time to come up with a more permanent solution… but time is not in our favor."

He added that it would be "foolish" for the House to think that the Senate will pass a casino bill.

Rep. Ray Yumul (R-Saipan) said if the bill is signed into law, it falls on the Legislature to make some adjustments in the fiscal year 2013 budget since the governor already submitted his spending plan.

Commonwealth Ports Authority Police Chief Jordon Lee I. Kosam, who attended the House session and is a current member of the Fund, said he has not decided yet whether to withdraw his contributions or not but he is thankful that at least those like him have that "option."

"It's not going to force them to withdraw, but they now have that option," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

A retiree who attended the House session said she doesn't agree with the Legislature's passage of the bill, adding that it's going to "kill" the defined benefit plan.

"Especially the older folks, they're going to suffer if the Fund is killed," she said.

The 13 House members who voted "yes" to the compromise version of HB 17-226 were Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan), Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan), floor leader George Camacho (Ind-Saipan), Reps. Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), Fred Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), Sylvester Iguel (Cov-Saipan), Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan), Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan), Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan), Trenton Conner (R-Tinian), and Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan).

The six who opposed the compromise bill were Reps. Frank Dela Cruz (R-Saipan), Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), Tony Sablan (R-Saipan), Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan), and Ray Yumul (R-Saipan).

Rep. Janet Maratita (Ind-Saipan) was absent.

What the bill does

The original bill intended 100 percent contribution withdrawal, but the Senate opposed it and instead offered a rollover to the DC plan.

The six-member conference committee co-chaired by Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan) and Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota) worked on the bill and recommended passage of HB 17-226, House Draft 1, Senate Substitute 1, Senate Draft 2, Conference Committee Substitute 1.

They reached a compromise wherein non-retired members of the DB plan will be allowed to withdraw their employee contributions regardless of years of service, without penalty, and without the requirement of severance of employment by rollover of the contributions to the DC plan.

The compromise bill also extends by three years or up to June 13, 2015, the period for Class I members to elect early retirement. That will give active members more time to pay their lump sum contribution to the Fund.

The conference committee stated that the enactment of the bill "will lessen the government's financial liabilities as it authorizes qualified government employees to withdraw their contributions from the Retirement Fund, thus decreasing the government's financial obligations to the pension fund."

"The potential adverse effect of this measure, however, is that it lessens the NMI Retirement Fund's lifespan, which will create an immediate financial obligation of the Commonwealth government retirees' pensions," the report said.

Currently, DB plan members who contributed to the Fund for 15 years or more are prohibited from refunding their employee contributions, despite indications that the Fund will be fiscally exhausted long before they can retire.

There are also unemployed active members of the DB plan with more than 15 years of service that cannot withdraw their retirement contributions.

Another group of active members are those with more than 15 years of service and employed in the private sector in and outside the CNMI.

"These active members will have to wait until they are 62 years old to retire and begin receiving their pensions. However, as stated above, the Retirement Fund may not last more than three or four years. Through this measure, all active members of the DB plan, regardless of their class or years of service, will be allowed to apply for a refund of their employee contributions from the DB plan, without penalty and without severing of their government employment for a period if 180 days," the joint panel said.

Govt told to pay Peter-Palican additional attorney's fees

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona issued an order yesterday that awarded additional attorney's fees to Emerenciana Peter-Palican, who won in her lawsuit against the CNMI government for her termination in 2006 as special assistant for Women's Affairs.

Manglona determined that Peter-Palican is entitled to $4,950 in attorney's fees, on top of the $29,407.50 in costs and attorney's fees the court previously awarded her.

The judge issued the order after Peter-Palican asked for an additional $4,950 in attorney's fees to cover the cost of responding to the CNMI government's post-trial motions.

On June 29, 2010, the court awarded the plaintiff $450 in costs and $29,407.50 in attorney's fees as the prevailing party in the lawsuit.

Subsequently, the CNMI government filed a motion for a new trial and other relief. Peter-Palican opposed the motion.

On Sept. 1, 2010, the court denied the motion and vacated the hearing. Peter-Palican then filed the request for additional costs.

The plaintiff claimed she spent 22 hours in preparation to respond to post-trial motions and seeks compensation at the rate of $225 an hour.

In granting the request, Manglona determined that the billing record provides enough detail to assess the reasonableness of the time spent.

Manglona said the rate of $225 an hour has already been determined to be reasonable.

The court ordered the CNMI government in March 2010 to pay Peter-Palican $216,049.88 in back wages. The court also ordered the government and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to reappoint her within 30 days to a government position that has a salary to or greater than what she used to have.

The CNMI government and Fitial appealed.

Basa pre-files concurrent resolution for 2013 budget

House Ways and Means Committee chair Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan) introduced yesterday House Concurrent Resolution 17-4 to approve a fiscal year 2013 budget, a measure that Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) said would be acted on during the next session.

Fiscal year 2013 is from Oct. 1, 2012, to Sept. 30, 2013.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial submitted to the Legislature on March 30 a 2013 budget of $102 million, the same level as that of 2012.

Under the governor's submission, the total projected resource for 2013 is $120.671 million. Of this amount, $102 million is available for government operations. The rest goes to bond payments, among other things.

Basa, in an interview, said he will start convening the Ways and Means Committee next week to review the governor's 2013 budget submission.

"I am targeting mid-May to introduce a budget bill," he said.

In fiscal year 2010, the government shut down for days because of failure to pass a budget on time resulting from a deadlock between the House and the Senate.

In 2011, the House and Senate were also deadlocked on the budget but were able to pass a spending package a few days before the Oct. 1 start of the fiscal year.

Basa said his committee will try to come up with a budget bill much earlier this year than in previous years. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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Retirees accuse Fund board of hiding info

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Donna Cruz, a retiree who has been attending meetings of the NMI Retirement Fund board, didn't expect anything to happen so quickly in just a matter of hours.

Speaking at the 9am board meeting yesterday, she questioned why the board was "so secretive" when it suddenly formed the pension holding corporation. Cruz said that if not for media reports, she would not be aware of the existence of the new corporation. The Fund, based on documents, established the new corporation on April 11.

But according to Fund counsel Carolyn Kern and board counsel Viola Alepuyo, the creation of the new corporation is part of the legal strategies that was approved by the board and had to be kept confidential for some period of time to prevent any "counter-actions" against the Fund. They assured, along with the trustees, that there was no intention to keep the matter secret as members and retirees deserve to know all matters pertaining to the pension program.

The board then went into more than two hours of closed-door meeting yesterday, only to announce some hours later that the Fund has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in federal court. A staff meeting was immediately held among the agency's employees while board members headed toward the Legislature and the governor to inform them of their latest decision.

Cruz said that "there's so little information coming out from the board."

Glen Hunter, who was at yesterday afternoon's news briefing, questioned the trustees' action when members and retirees were not even consulted or informed about the bankruptcy plan.

"They [members and retirees] were not even aware that bankruptcy is even on the table," he said, adding that because of the lack of proper information dissemination, it looks like the board railroaded the action and took a "drastic measure."

The Fund called for a meeting for members and retirees last night at the American Memorial Park. The objective was to explain the board's recent decision and its impact on members.

Judge dismisses complaint vs Miah

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Monday granted the U.S. government's motion to dismiss a criminal complaint filed against Mohammad Jahangir Miah, who allegedly masterminded a scheme of cashing fraudulent CNMI tax refund checks in grocery stores.

Assistant U.S. attorney Stephen F. Leon Guerrero asked the court to dismiss the complaint after an indictment was filed last week that charged Miah with violations similar to those charged in the this case.

The indictment charged Miah and his two alleged conspirators—Earl Eric Mirano and Cecilia Blas—with conspiracy to commit bank fraud.

FBI agents arrested Miah last March 19. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Judge acquits security guard

Superior Court Associate Judge Perry B. Inos yesterday acquitted a security guard of charges that he threatened a woman with a pick tool.

Inos determined that the government failed to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Lamberto Flores committed assault and disturbing the peace. Inos said he finds the testimony of the alleged victim "incredible" and questioned the credibility of the other witness.

"You are now a free man," Inos told the 48-year-old Flores, who teared up as he sat beside his counsel, assistant public defender Douglas Hartig.

The Office of the Attorney General had alleged that on June 2, 2011, Flores assaulted a woman and disturbed her peace. Flores at the time was holding a pick that he used to backfill an exposed water pipeline at an apartment compound in Garapan.

The alleged victim reported that Flores had tampered with a water meter.

Hartig asserted that CUC cleared Flores of wrongdoing. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

FUND

From Page 1

or's obligations so as to allow the business to continue.

The Fund also filed yesterday several motions, including a request for entry of order providing for the continued payment of benefits to government retirees, their survivors, and some persons with disabilities.

According to Huesman, the Chapter 11 filing was precipitated by the discrepancy between the Fund's current ability to pay benefits to beneficiaries and the Fund's current obligations to the same beneficiaries.

While the Fund urgently needs to restructure its obligations immediately to facilitate its survival, Huesman said it is also critically important that beneficiaries continue to receive their benefits through the commencement and conduct of this restructuring proceeding.

Huesman said it is for this reason that the Fund has taken steps to provide beneficiaries with full payments for a period of up to two months from a source outside of the Fund's estate while the court considers the relief being requested in the petition.

The lawyer said the Fund's payment of benefits to beneficiaries and operating expenses have averaged approximately $77.9 million per year in the last three years.

In contrast, he said, during those same years, the Fund's funding—consisting of employee contributions, returns on investments, and employer contributions—has averaged approximately $30.9 million per year.

"As a result of such continuous underfunding, which necessitated withdrawing from its portfolio to cover funding shortfalls, the value of the [Fund's] assets has fallen from $353,475,412 in 2009 to its current level of $268,448,997.84," Huesman said.

The Fund, he added, is subject to liabilities (both current and actuarial) totaling about $911 million.

The Fund's other motion seeks an order authorizing it to maintain existing bank accounts and continue its use of its cash management system; continued use of existing business forms; opening new debtor in possession accounts; and foregoing bond requirements for investments.

The Fund also wants the court to allow it to retain, employ, compensate, and reimburse the expenses of certain professionals used in the ordinary course of Fund business.

The other motion seeks a court order authorizing the Fund to pay its employees' wages, salaries, and other compensation; reimbursement of pre-petition employee business expenses; payment of pre-petition tax and other withholdings to third parties; contributions to pre-petition employee health and other benefit programs; and payment of workers' compensation obligations and other insurance premiums.

The Fund also wants a court order that will give it more time to file its schedules of assets and liabilities, schedule of executory contracts, and unexpired leases and statement of financial affairs.

RETIREES

From Page 1

tion will allow it to serve as an "emergency reserve account," which currently holds two months' worth of pension for retirees and two months' worth of premium for health and life insurance of retirees. After these two months, the Fund will ask for the continued payout of benefits from the bankruptcy court.

Newly hired bankruptcy counsel Jeremy B. Coffey said the Fund intends to use all means provided by the federal court to recover amounts due from all sources, including the central government, which owes the Fund an estimated $317 million in employer's contribution.

Coffey said the bankruptcy filing is constitutional as Chapter 11 is designed to facilitate the restructuring of the Fund's obligation and ease its financial distress. He said the Fund is in dire financial distress and it needs to be addressed with the ultimate goal of prolonging its existence.

Viola Alepuyo, the board's legal counsel, said the bankruptcy filing will give retirees a stronger voice, compared to the receivership option that has also been brought up in recent past.

She defined receivership as a "liquidation," which the board rejects, choosing instead the path of "restructuring and reorganization."

"The board felt that receivership is more akin to liquidation. The goal is not to liquidate the Fund but to restructure the obligation so that we can pay the benefits for as long as possible. So today's decision is really to protect those benefit payments and to find ways how to collect what is owed the Fund," said Alepuyo.

When asked how long the bankruptcy period will last, both lawyers responded that "there is no definite timeframe" but the intent is to get out as quickly as possible—probably in six months. However, they noted that there are things outside the Fund's control that may occur within that period. Their immediate plan is to engage with creditors and retirees so they can start work on a strategy that will be presented to the bankruptcy court.

The legal team assured that the Fund's operation is business-as-usual, with the board of trustees, money managers, and consultants retained in place. Investment strategies will continue for the growth of the portfolio, they said.

Railroaded decision

Responding to claims that the board railroaded its decision to file for bankruptcy, Alepuyo said this is not true as the issue had been on the board's table for a long time now.

She revealed that before the bankruptcy decision was made, the Fund filed a motion for equitable relief with Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo, asking him to make the decisions that will ensure the Fund would last beyond 2014. The judge declined to do so, saying he has no authority over the matter. Instead, Govendo recommended some remedies for the Fund to consider, including the receivership option.

Alepuyo said the board approved the bankruptcy option in previous board meetings as one of its litigation strategies. She said it took the board at least 69 months looking for legal remedies to the crisis.

Alepuyo said the Fund hired Coffey as its bankruptcy counsel after finding it difficult to hire one on island and in the Pacific. She said the initial rate offer for his service was $1,000 per hour, which then dropped to $475 per hour. That rate is still up for court approval.

During the bankruptcy period, Alepuyo encouraged lawmakers to continue working on bills that would help fund the pension program because it will help convince the court to remove the Fund from bankruptcy.

DIFFERING

From Page 1

up with the most effective reorganization plan for the Fund's liabilities," press secretary Angel Demapan said.

He said Fitial and the Fund board "will hold another follow-up meeting once the district court responds to the Fund's filing of this case."

After Fund officials led by board chair Bernadita Palacios and counsels Viola Alepuyo and Jeremy Coffey met with the governor yesterday, they also met with lawmakers in the House chamber and called for a news briefing about it.

Fund officials first explained to lawmakers that a Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing is meant only to restructure the pension agency's financial obligations, which Fund officials said is a lot better than receivership or liquidation of assets.

The ensuing question-and-answer, however, quickly turned into a heated argument among lawmakers.

Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (R-Saipan) said the Fund had to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy because the Legislature "failed miserably" to help save the Fund for months and years. He said this is a "crisis legislature" because lawmakers only act and work together only when there is already a crisis.

Sen. Juan Ayuyu (Ind-Rota) told Reyes not to blame current lawmakers because the Fund's problems started many years back during previous administrations and legislatures.

"Senator Reyes had been a member of the Legislature for many years," said Ayuyu, a freshman senator.

Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota), who has been heading special committees addressing Fund issues, said the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing was a "sudden decision" that caught lawmakers by surprise. She said she wished the Fund brought this plan up with lawmakers, who have formed joint Senate-House committees to try to prolong the Fund's life expectancy.

Taimanao said the court gave the government to come up with a plan by June 15. "I still have faith in the Legislature… But I guess it's too late now," she said.

Alepuyo reiterated Palacios' message to House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) that the Chapter 11 bankruptcy filing does not prevent the Legislature from continuing to pursue such efforts to help the Fund.

"Hopefully we'll be out [of bankruptcy] in six months. It's like in ICU [intensive care unit]. [The Fund is] sick but we want to get out of there. I'm hoping you'll be motivated to do it faster," she told lawmakers.

At this point, Reyes talked about a "crisis Legislature" and the heated discussion ensued.

Later, Fund officials told lawmakers they had to leave because of a 3pm news briefing they had scheduled.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan) said it's "shocking for all of us" to learn that the Fund filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in court, and yet Fund officials wanted to leave in hurry without fully discussing the matter with lawmakers. He said the Fund made the filing "without consultation" with the Legislature.

Reyes again said this was because the Legislature "miserably failed."

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), who was listening in to the proceedings, later said it's "very unfortunate" that the Fund board had to decide to file for bankruptcy. He said he's also "extremely surprised" about the court filing.

"The board of trustees, whose members are appointed by the governor, concluded that they no longer trust Governor Fitial. Now they're turning to the third branch of government, the court, to do something. They're basically putting their hands up. The House is also sitting on Senate bills and initiatives that would have helped the Fund," Manglona said.

House Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan) said the Senate bills and initiatives are being reviewed, and based on what he heard from members, many of these proposals would only create more problems for the Fund rather than help it.

The Fund, through board chair Palacios, told the House speaker in a two-page letter yesterday that the Fund looks forward to continued positive dialogue regarding solutions to the pension agency's problems.

"We are encouraged by the tools that Chapter 11 offers to the Fund and along with your support, believe we can create a positive result for the Fund's participants. The board is hereby respectfully requesting an opportunity to work with your office to plan and effectuate a re-organization of the Fund's liabilities to ensure its success in being fully funded," she said.

ANOTHER PLANNED LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE:

'Cut number of lawmakers but raise their salaries'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Another legislative initiative is in the offing, this time to reduce the number of lawmakers from 29 to 17 but will increase their annual salaries from $39,300 to $60,000 and their annual operational or office account to $100,000.

Rep. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan) said yesterday that he expects to introduce his legislative initiative at the next House session.

In the draft legislative initiative, Senate members will be reduced from nine to six, with one member elected at large from each legislative district at each general election.

The term of office for senator will still be four years, but no person shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms.

Tenorio's proposed initiative also raises the age requirement for those running for senators, from at least 25 years old to at least 35 years old.

His proposed initiative also makes the lieutenant governor the Senate president "but shall vote only when the Senate is equally divided."

Senate President Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), when asked for comment, said he supports the former governor's planned proposal to reduce the number of lawmakers but only if senators are elected at large from each of three senatorial districts.

"If he's sincere in reducing the number of lawmakers, I suggest he make sure that senators are elected from each of the senatorial district or it will be defeated on Rota and Tinian. The legislative initiative has to get two-thirds vote of at least two senatorial districts," Manglona told *Saipan Tribune.*

Dead on arrival

Manglona also said that if Tenorio, a former governor and speaker, insists on increasing the salary of lawmakers, his planned legislative initiative would be "dead on arrival" in the Senate.

"People are already suffering, and I don't know if the former governor knows that. This is not the right time to do that. I will not support it," the Senate president said.

Under Tenorio's planned initiative, the number of House members will be reduced from 20 to 11, who will be elected at large in their respective legislative districts.

Their term will be increased from two to four years, but they will not be allowed to serve for more than two consecutive terms.

However, House members' age requirement remains at 21.

Rep. Joseph Palacios (R-Saipan), who introduced a legislative initiative in February 2011 that would reduce by half the number of Saipan members of the House from 18 to nine, said he is currently reviewing Tenorio's proposed initiative.

Palacios said that Tenorio asked him to consider whether the two measures could be merged.

His initiative is still under review by the House Judiciary and Government Operations Committee.

BEATING THE DEADLINE HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Taxpayers proceed to the Division of Revenue and Taxation office in Dandan last Friday to file their 2011 income tax returns in time for the April 17 deadline. Some 20,000 income tax returns are expected to be filed this year.

Corp. seeks to recover expenses on indigent FAS dialysis patients

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. may soon recover millions of dollars spent for the dialysis treatment of indigent citizens from the Freely Associated States if it will qualify dialysis as an "emergency" service.

Tom Schenck of the Division of Medicaid & Children's Health Operations for the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services disclosed this in a letter to healthcare corporation chief executive officer Juan N. Babauta and CNMI Medicaid adviser Esther Muña.

Babauta had written to Herb Schultz, regional director for the U.S. Health and Human Services in San Francisco, to ask for technical assistance on a number of initiatives that the corporation is exploring in order to alleviate some of its fiscal challenges.

Babauta's letter specifically inquired, among others, the potential opportunities to recover expenses paid each year for the dialysis treatment of indigent patients from Freely Associated States (Palau, Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia).

Schenck wrote to Babauta that under a Medicare provision (42 CFR 440.255), emergency services provided to legal aliens, including FAS patients, are eligible for Medicaid reimbursement.

"Furthermore, CMS allows states and territories flexibility to define what constitutes an 'emergency service.' There are states that have included dialysis in their definition of an emergency service, and are therefore claiming Medicaid Federal Financial Participation (FFP) for the provision of this service to aliens," explained Schenck.

What constitutes an emergency service, he said, should be determined by the CNMI Medicaid Office, in conjunction with Medicare.

"In the event the CNMI Medicaid adopted an internal policy to consider dialysis an emergency service, then the expenditures related to those dialysis services can be included in the provider's claim (as stipulated in the reimbursement section of the CNMI Medicaid State Plan) for Medicaid reimbursement. In addition, CNMI Medicaid can only claim FFP for FAS dialysis patients that would otherwise be eligible for Medicaid," he further explained.

Eligibility of patients from FAS

Babauta also inquired about the potential for Medicaid eligibility for individuals from Freely Associated States.

Schenck disclosed that that opportunity is presented by Section 214 of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009, which permits states and territories to cover certain children and pregnant women in both Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program who are "lawfully residing in the United States" as described in a section of the Social Security Act.

"This section of CHIPRA allows the possibility of full Medicaid eligibility, rather than just reimbursement for emergency services, for children and pregnant women from the FAS who would otherwise be eligible for Medicaid if not for their immigration status," he said.

As a result of these discussions, the CNMI submitted a State Plan Amendment that will implement a new Attachment 4.1 into the CNMI Medicaid State Plan. This attachment provides the authority for the CNMI to take advantage of Section 214 of CHIPRA, and to claim FFP for lawfully residing children and pregnant women who will become newly eligible for Medicaid/CHIP upon approval of the State Plan Amendment.

The State Plan Amendment is currently under review. Upon approval, its provisions will become retroactive to Jan. 1, 2012, according to Schenck.

Certified public expenditures

Babauta also inquired about the appropriateness of using certified public expenditures as a source of local Medicaid match.

Schenck explained that the process of using certified public expenditures as the territory's non-federal match in order to draw federal financial participation is allowable, and is practiced in numerous states.

"In order to do so, states and territories must have an approved State Plan protocol through which costs are certified and reconciled to actual cost by the governmental provider; the Medicaid Agency then draws the associated FFP," he explained.

Schenck said that on March 30, 2012, CNMI Medicaid took the important step of submitting its State Plan Amendment 12-003, which will create an Attachment 4.19-A. This attachment sets forth the protocol that will be used by the healthcare corporation and CNMI Medicaid in order to certify public expenditures.

This protocol is currently being reviewed. Upon approval, this protocol will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 2012.

Northern Marianas Humanities Council
Navigating the Human Experience

Vacancy Announcement

Board of Directors
Northern Marianas Humanities Council

The Board of Directors for the Northern Marianas Humanities Council wishes to announce an impending vacancy on its board of directors.

The Council is a non-profit private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council's mission is to "foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the humanities through support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and to the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth."

The Council's board is comprised of thirteen volunteer members who serve three year terms. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our CNMI community. The ideal candidate will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities. Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Raising funds and recruiting community partners;
- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually;
- Participating in working committee meetings;
- Evaluating Council programs and activities;
- Reviewing grant applications;
- Providing input from various community members, and
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings on behalf of the Northern Marianas Humanities Council.

Interested individuals are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Tracy M. Guerrero, Chair, Northern Marianas Humanities Council at Post Office Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950** or delivered to the Northern Marianas Humanities Council office located in the Springs Plaza Building in Gualo Rai, Saipan. All letters of interest and resumes must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, **April 30, 2012**. For additional information, please contact the Council's Executive Director, Scott Russell, at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at www.nmihumanities.org.

Public schools expect to end fiscal year with $5M deficit

»Finance assures PSS will pay $400K monthly for its utilities

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Public School System projects to incur a deficit of $4.5 million to $5 million by the end of current fiscal year in September, according to PSS finance director Richard Waldo.

In his report to the Board of Education on Monday, Waldo said that, after deducting the 1 percent reserved for the Office of Public Auditor, public schools will get just $29.8 million this year—significantly lower than the anticipated expenditure of $35 million for the 12-month period.

This deficit, Waldo said, may still increase depending on future utility billings for public schools.

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* that the projected deficit is the result of the meager appropriation allocated for PSS this fiscal year. PSS asked for $36 million, the Legislature only approved $30 million: $2.5 million from appropriation and $500,000 from contract workers' fees.

To bridge the "gap" of $5 million, Sablan is counting on receivables from the central government, estimated at $8 million, which includes the maintenance-of-effort requirement.

During Friday's legislative summit for parents, PSS financial consultant Ed Tenorio emphasized the importance of the audit report for fiscal year 2010 to help determine the "right" amount of how much the central government really owes PSS for the maintenance-of-effort requirement.

This requirement is a federal funding rule that mandates the CNMI government as a grant recipient to maintain and meet certain levels of local funding to be eligible for full participation in federal grant funding.

PSS and education officials are claiming that the CNMI government has been violating this requirement and may end up returning all federal grants awarded through the ARRA's state fiscal stabilization fund.

Waldo said that due to the projected deficit, PSS may not able to pay all its obligations to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. but he disclosed that Finance Secretary Larissa Larson had promised to pay PSS' utility billings directly to CUC in the amount of $400,000 a month.

Waldo said this amount is in addition to what was agreed upon in the $1.7 million memorandum of understanding signed by PSS and the administration. Under this MOU, the government pays $50,000 weekly for PSS' utilities.

Once the $400,000 is received by CUC, Waldo said this automatically represents PSS' payment for utilities. PSS, it was learned, is only making $100,000 monthly payments to CUC.

Since the across-the-board implementation of energy conservation at PSS, Waldo said significant savings have been recorded, now amounting to $308,000.

This summer, PSS projects to generate energy savings of $600,000 when all schools close classes on three islands. From a monthly billing of $750,000 during summer period, the projected consumption is forecast to go down to $150,000 to $200,000 a month.

Waldo is optimistic that PSS can continue pay its personnel until the end of the fiscal year.

Education board OKs *creation of* PSS *Foundation*

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Board of Education approved Monday the creation and establishment of the Public School System Foundation, which will serve as the system's main fundraising arm.

Following the approval of the organization's charter and bylaws, Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan said they will apply for the foundation's license as a non-profit group.

The newly formed foundation has named 10 interim members to its board of directors: five from the board—Marylou S. Ada, Lucy Blanco-Maratita, Herman T. Guerrero, Galvin Deleon Guerrero, and Tanya King—and five from the management side— Commissioner Sablan, associate commissioner for administration Glenn Muña, federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh, finance director Richard Waldo, and financial consultant Ed Tenorio.

On Monday, all interim directors were asked to donate $100 each to serve as seed money for the foundation as it begins acquiring licenses and others.

Sablan said the creation of the PSS Foundation is historic as this will greatly help in addressing the financial challenges of schools and students using "non-appropriated funds"—money that's outside the annual budget allocation of the local government.

Sablan said the foundation's annual meeting is temporarily set on May 16, during which the board will lay out its plans and activities to get the things started.

"Today is historic in itself because we now take off to seek resources that we can use to leverage the cost of public education in the Commonwealth. We hope to look not just within the system, but will work with our alumni and corporations as well as other foundations that are outside the CNMI," Sablan said, adding that the foundation will function just like the NMC Foundation.

Prior to the creation of the foundation, individual schools and school clubs and organizations would conduct their own fundraisers for specific needs. Sablan said that schools will still have the opportunity to do their own fundraisers. "All the more, the better [for our students]," she added.

Because education tax credit donations are also considered non-appropriated funds for schools, the new foundation will not affect ETC funds, Sablan said.

Casino signature drive at Carolinian Utt today

»Proponents respond to Kilili's guarded position on Saipan casinos

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Proponents of a casino popular initiative will hold an informal gathering today at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan at 5pm to gather more signatures from Saipan voters and to get an update on the number of signatures so far gathered.

At least 2,500 to 2,700 signatures are needed to place the Saipan casino gaming question in the Nov. 6 ballot.

Dr. Jack Angello, who is leading the signature drive, said today's meeting will allow any registered voter on Saipan and the Northern Islands another opportunity to sign the petition so it can be placed on the ballot.

"The most important aspect of the petition is to get the casino issue before all the voters on Saipan and the Northern Islands, in order to determine whether or not the people really want to currently reject an opportunity to add much-needed revenues to our fast-sinking Titanic economy," Angello told *Saipan Tribune*.

He said, "Everything is sinking right now, and there not enough lifeboats to go around and the sharks are circling with smiles on their faces."

"Just ask the 64-hour government workers and private sector workers who have had their paychecks slashed. Just ask the retirees who are now having their fund placed into Chapter 11 Bankruptcy in the federal court. Just ask the dedicated friends and relatives who stand on the roadside asking for medical referral donations. Just ask the students, who haven't seen their scholarship checks since last year. The economy is sinking fast and the casino initiative is only asking that people give casino gambling a chance to help the people of Saipan and the Northern Islands," he said.

Angello also said he respects and thanks Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's (Ind-MP) "guarded support" of the casino initiative.

But he said he "disagrees" with Sablan's remark that the petition is "shortsighted and that we need to develop things long-term for the Northern Mariana Islands to become a tourist destination."

Sablan said each casino license holder should be required to bring in an additional 200,000 tourists—inclusive of the gamblers and their families and friends—every year as a condition of renewing their annual license the following year, along with ensuring they pay their taxes.

Angello said "I think the Good Lord has already taken care of the long-term tourist destination thing with the already created beaches, mountain areas, fishing and scuba places, beautiful scenery and weather, etc."

"All we need to do is to manage those God-given gifts properly and add some man-made activities and excitement like casino gambling to increase the popularity of Saipan as a 'now' tourist destination. Again, with the sharks circling us 'today,' I think most people want 'shortsighted' current solutions that have long-term life built into them," he added.

Angello also said the "people's petition to place casino gambling on the November ballot has nothing to do with the governor cutting the MVA's [Marianas Visitors Authority's] budget."

"The governor supports the people petition, he did not create it, and he did not cut the MVA budget in relationship to the petition, which is a product of public hearings and everyday island residents who have major concerns about the economy and welfare of the islanders. I don't know where Congressman Kilili got that apples-and-oranges information," he said.

Movers of the signature campaign said that by allowing casinos to operate on Saipan, 80-hour work every two weeks could be restored. Local revenues, license fees and gross gaming revenue tax will be used to help fund the Retirement Fund, the medical referral program, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance Board and other programs and services on Saipan.

The 22-page local initiative requires a $5 million initial license fee to be paid within 90 days after the license approval and $200,000 in annual license fee every year thereafter.

DPW's Adopt-A-Highway program seeks public and private partners

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Works' Highway Section launched yesterday a public service campaign to encourage community involvement in keeping highways in the CNMI clean and litter-free.

Adopt-A-Highway is a program supported and approved by the Federal Highway Administration, which provides funding for many of DPW's road projects, and is developed and administered by each state or territory in the U.S., said Highway administrator Sonya Pangelinan Dancoe.

Dancoe, guest speaker at the general membership meeting of the Rotary Club of Saipan, said that the program is part of their efforts to take a "proactive approach" in addressing the need for a "reliable maintenance program."

According to Dancoe, DPW is tasked with the tremendous role of ensuring a safe and efficient transportation system, including the responsibility to ensure that signs are visible to motorists, roads are safe for bikers and pedestrians, and roadways showcase the natural beauty of its surrounding environment.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Public Works Highway administrator Sonya Pangelinan Dancoe, left, talks about the agency's Adopt-A-Highway program while Highway real estate and planning specialist Geralyn Dela Cruz looks on during the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday.

But the CNMI's economic situation has left DPW without enough means to maintain the infrastructure on the islands, which depend on tourism as its main industry, she said.

"DPW has created the Adopt-A-Highway Public/Private Partnership Program, which is aimed to promote environmental stewardship within the community, encourage volunteering and leadership skills among youth groups, foster interagency cooperation, and promote businesses and organizations that are involved in the campaign to keep our roads safe and clean," said Dancoe.

Geralyn Dela Cruz, DPW Highway real estate and planning specialist, explained that the Adopt-A-Highway program can involve any business group, government agency, or non-profit organization to sign an agreement and adopt a one- or two-mile stretch of highway or an intersection for a two-year term.

The agreement, Dela Cruz said, requires the participating group to undergo safety training once a year and hold at least four mandatory cleanups a year.

"The program also has an environmental impact because when you pick up the litter, you prevent it from entering the storm drains," said Dela Cruz.

DPW will provide trash bags, disposable gloves, and trash bins for the volunteer groups and will also arrange for any need to remove heavy or hazardous items.

To recognize the group's participation and efforts, DPW will place an Adopt-a-Highway sign showing the group's name along the section they are adopting.

"This sends a positive message to the community that volunteering and partnership is an important part of our future," added Dancoe.

Dancoe noted that they will be teaming up with Safety 1st Systems, which will issue coupons to volunteer groups. DPW will also partner with a local shirt company so that the groups can avail of discounts in getting shirts for volunteers for "uniformity" purposes.

For more information, visit DPW Highway Section next to Pizza Hut along Middle Road, call 235-5827 or 9570 or email cnmiadoptahighway@gmail.com.

Hotel occupancy at 78 percent in March 2012

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported 78.39-percent occupancy among its 13 member hotels for March 2012, an 8-percent increase from March 2011.

A total of 60,630 of 77,345 available room nights sold in March 2012, compared to 54,540 of 77,500 of available room nights sold over the same period last year. Room rates were $93.55 during the month, compared to $89.47 last March.

"Not only are visitor arrivals up overall this year, but the March Saipan Marathon also continues to help boost occupancy," said HANMI vice chair BK Park.

So far this calendar year, hotel occupancy is at an average 78.82 percent, just shy of the healthy industry indicator average of 80 percent and 4 percent higher than last year.

Meanwhile, HANMI is steaming ahead with plans for two of its major annual events, the May Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden held along with the Marianas Visitors Authority, as well as the June 2 HANMI Charity Golf Tournament Classic at Mariana Country Club.

"Beyond the hotel industry's financial contributions to the CNMI, we are looking forward to giving back to the community with these two events," said Park.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of the NMI. ***(HANMI)***

5th Saipan Awaodori Festival breaks out of usual program

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Saipan Awaodori Team smile for a group photo. About 45 members of the group are scheduled to perform alongside members of the Tokyo Tensuiren from Koenji, Japan for the 5th Saipan Awaodori Festival on Thursday, April 19.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
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REPORTER

The 5th Saipan Awaodori Festival slated for tomorrow will not have its usual program at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan owing to the ongoing construction of the area's sewer line, which collapsed two weeks ago.

About 45 young members of the Saipan Awaodori Team and some 14 professional dancers and musicians from the Tokyo Tensuiren group out of Koenji, Japan will be performing in this year's festival, usually held every year at the Paseo de Marianas to coincide with the weekly Garapan Street Market at Coral Tree Avenue.

"The unexpected construction of Coral Tree Avenue by CUC and the relocation of Street Market at the Fishing Base will hinder us from holding the planned program for the festival," said Sonia Siwa of PDM Promoters, which hosts the festival annually.

Siwa said the performers will instead present in various locations. They will be at the Fiesta Resort & Spa lobby entrance between 5:30pm and 6pm; at Paseo de Marianas in front of Power 99 from 6:15pm to 6:45pm; at DFS Galleria entrance fronting ABC Store by 7:10pm to 7:30pm; and at the Garapan Fishing Base for the Street Market between 8pm and 8:30pm.

Siwa noted that the group will begin dancing from Shenanigans Restaurant building on their way to DFS Galleria, that's why they have sought the assistance of the Department of Public Safety to facilitate traffic flow in the area and ensure the safety of performers.

She disclosed that they thought of postponing the festival to a later date but decided against it due to the considerable time and effort put in by the young members of the Saipan Awaodori Team in rehearsing for the event.

Additionally, the Tokyo Tensuiren members are already scheduled to arrive for the festival, said Siwa.

"We also thought of just moving the program altogether to the Garapan Fishing Base, where the Street Market has been temporarily relocated. But Paseo de Marianas has been and will always be the home base of the festival," Siwa told *Saipan Tribune*.

To encourage more community members to watch the festival performances, Siwa said there will be cards to be given away at the Fiesta Resort & Spa where the group will initially perform. The card will be stamped at each of the location where the dancers will perform.

"Completed stamped cards can be used as food coupon to Kinpachi Restaurant for lunch bento special on any day from Monday to Saturday," said Siwa.

Power 99 will also have a "password game" for its listeners for a chance to win free movie tickets, UFC fight tickets, and $5 lunch special coupons from Kinpachi Restaurant.

Siwa added that their audience will also receive free fans.

Awaodori festivals originated in Japan and are celebrated with thousands of dancers performing the Awa dance to upbeat music and parade along the streets.

The 5th Saipan Awaodori Festival is sponsored by DFS Galleria, Docomo Pacific, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, and Kinpachi Restaurant. For more information, call 234-6900.

Tourism Month, Taste of the Marianas return in May

With the theme "Tourism is Everybody's Business," the Marianas Visitors Authority is gearing up to lead the community in celebrating Tourism Month and 14th Annual Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival and Beer Garden in May.

"As the primary economic driver of the Northern Marianas, tourism provides government revenue, public and private sector jobs, and numerous other benefits for our community," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "May Tourism Month is an excellent opportunity for our community to learn more about the industry, celebrate its benefits, and most importantly, consider how we can each get involved in supporting the industry in the year ahead."

Tourism Month kicks off early with the semi-annual Japan Saipan Travel Association Tourism Industry Cleanup slated for Monday, April 23, in Garapan. The cleanup precedes Japan's Golden Week holiday and its accompanying surge of visitors are expected in the Northern Marianas. The public is invited to join the cleanup begin at 6:30am at American Memorial Park south to the Carolinian Affairs Office along Beach Road and the beach.

A proclamation signing for the month will be held on Thursday, April 26, 2012, at 2pm at the Office of the Governor on Capital Hill.

Residents are encouraged to demonstrate their island pride and culture by wearing Chamorro or Carolinian attire or traditional wear during Hafa Adai-Tirow Spirit Islandwear Day each Friday during May. In addition, Facebook fans of "Hafa Adai Tirow Spirit Islandwear in the Northern Mariana Islands" who post pictures beginning April 26 have a chance to win Taste of the Marianas tokens. One randomly selected fan with an islandwear photo will receive $10 in tokens each week.

"Visitors to our islands want to experience local culture," said MVA Community Projects manager Martin Duenas. "By wearing island print shirts, *mestiza, mwar,* and other indigenous attire or ornaments, residents can help promote what's unique about the Northern Marianas."

Tourism trivia will also be conducted on local radio stations, with Taste of the Marianas tokens and Tourism Month T-shirts available for the winners.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands will join the MVA in welcoming hundreds of visitors and residents expected to gather for the Taste of the Marianas, which kicks off on May 5, 2012, and will continue every Saturday evening beginning at 6pm throughout the month at American Memorial Park. Local hotels and restaurants will offer fine fare at a reasonable fare, with most dinner items at $6 or less. Throughout the evening, live entertainment is offered on the main stage while secondary entertainment and competitions will take place at the secondary stage.

Festivities on May 5 will include the opening ceremony at 6pm, followed by live entertainment on the main stage. On the secondary stage, two heats of the Hotdog Eating Competition will be held at 8pm for competitors under 18 years of age and at 9pm for adults. Participants for competition can register on site on a first-come, first-serve basis.

A Pie-eating Competition will be held on May 14, while the Bartenders' Cocktail Competition will follow on May 19. The Chefs Competition on May 26 will pit hotel junior chefs in a cook-off highlighting a select cut of Certified Angus Beef and local ingredients.

Arts and crafts will also be on sale, and the festival will also give attendees the opportunity to stay up-to-date on the latest NMI tourism trends through nightly My Marianas slideshow presentations. ***(MVA)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS PTA meeting set

The Marianas High School Parent Teacher Association, in conjunction with MHS Parent Literacy Night, will meet at the MHS gym on Thursday, April 19, 2012, at 6pm. All MHS parents are encouraged to attend. Refreshments will be served. Point of contact: Cherlyn Cabrera, 237-3206. ***(PR)***

Navy training at Warning Area 517

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Navy will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on April 18-19,from 8am to 5pm. The public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators, are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank. ***(USN)***

UOG travel course to China, Tibet, Mongolia

The University of Guam is offering a travel course to China, Tibet, and Mongolia this summer and it is open to the public as well as UOG students. An organization meeting is set for today, April 18, at 3:30pm in the first floor conference room in the Humanities and Social Sciences building room (Room 120). For more information, call Dr. Kim Skoog at 735-2800/2811 (socrates@guam.net). ***(UOG)***

Public library to close of inventory

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed for its annual inventory from April 26 to April 30, 2012. Normal library hours will resume Tuesday, May 3, 2012. Sorry for the inconvenience. ***(PR)***

PTA meeting at Saipan Southern High

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: There will be a PTA meeting today, April 18, 2012, at 6pm in the Manta Café. Please join us as important information will be addressed. ***(PR)***

KagES calendar for April

Kagman Elementary School would like to inform all parents and guardians of the following important events for the month of April:

- Wednesday, April 18, 2012: PTSA Meeting and Parent Literacy Night. 6-7pm.
- Friday, April 20, 2012: Report card day, 1:30-3:30pm.
- Friday, April 20, 2012: Early dismissal. 1st-6th grade, 12pm; Kindergarten, 10:30am.
- Month of April: Registration for all grades ***(PR)***

John Gonzales LIVE schedule

- April 18: Austism in the CNMI in Celebration of Autism Awareness Month

Guests: Chad Merfalen, Autism Youth Self Advocate; Larissa Reyes, Autism Youth Self Advocate; and John Demapan, Autism Youth Self Advocate.

Live on April 18 and rebroadcasts on April 23 and 24, from 6:30pm – 7:30pm on KMCV Channel 14. Airs on Betelnut Radio.com on April 19 at 6 pm Pacific Standard Time and 9pm Eastern Standard Time (Thursday, April 20 at 11am Chamorro Standard Time).

Viewers can participate by calling (287-4230), texting (285-META) (6382), or emailing (johngonzaleslive@gmail.com). ***(PR)***

Get in shape with yoga and Zumba at NMC

The Northern Marianas College through the Community Development Institute is offering short-term courses on kundalini yoga and Zumba.

Kundalini yoga is an ancient discipline designed to enhance overall physical and mental wellness. During this course, participants will learn how to do different yoga poses along with meditation and breathing techniques.

Zumba is a popular fitness program inspired by Latin dance. It is marketed as "an exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, Latin-inspired, calorie-burning dance fitness-party" (www.zumba.com). Zumba consists of various aerobic exercises that also tone and sculpt the body.

These courses are offered as part of the college's mission to provide customized, continuing educational, professional development instruction, as well as personal enrichment opportunities in response to community needs.

The Kundalini Yoga course will begin on Saturday, April 28, 2012, and will continue every Saturday until the last day on June 23, 2012. The schedule is 9am to 10am at the NMC As Terlaje campus.

The Zumba course will begin on Friday, May 11, 2012, and will continue every Monday and Friday until the last day on June 8, 2012. The schedule is 4:30pm to 5:30pm at the NMC As Terlaje campus.

The fee for each course is $90. Minimum enrollment for both courses is 15 enrollees. It is recommended that all interested individuals register before the start of the first day of class. Certificates of participation will be awarded to registered students who complete each course. Full payment is required for admission to a class.

To register, or for information about these courses, visit the CDI Office in Building P on the NMC Campus in As Terlaje or call 234-5498 Ext. 1005/1010/1019 or e-mail Les Ogumoro-Uludong at logumoro@nmcnet.edu, or Orrin Pharmin at orrinp@nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

PDM Promoters haul 940 lbs of trash in cleanup

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Saipan Awaodori Team and Kinpachi Restaurant employees have their picture taken just before their Saturday cleanup in Garapan.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Non-profit group PDM Promoters gathered on April 14 volunteers for their monthly cleanup in the Garapan district, which hauled a total of 940 lbs of trash.

The group was composed of 13 members of the Saipan Awaodori Team, 12 staffers of Kinpachi Restaurant, and Yoko Horimoto, mother of one of the Saipan Awaodori Team members.

Sonia Siwa of PDM Promoters said most of the trash they collected were dried leaves, bushes, cigarette butts, empty beer bottles, and cans from the road next to Winchell's to Coral Tree Avenue, Paseo de Marianas, then to the fire station and the length of Beach Road up to Joeten Shopping Center.

Siwa noted that there was "usual trash" from various businesses within Paseo de Marianas area when the group collected trash in the area.

"We cannot say that the trash came from the Street Market since the event was relocated to the Garapan Fishing Base and that the Division of Parks and Recreation just collected the trash last Thursday afternoon," Siwa lamented.

NCD Community Forum on Rota tomorrow

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Division of Public Health would like to inform the Rota community that a forum on non-communicable diseases will be held tomorrow, April 19, 2012, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the Office of the Mayor of Rota's Conference Room.

The forum, like those recently held on the islands of Saipan and Tinian, will touch on issues of non-communicable diseases and associated risk factors that are the most common causes of disability and death of our people. This epidemic of NCDs is directly linked to four risk factors—poor diet, lack of physical activity, tobacco use, and alcohol abuse. NCDs are lifestyle related, and for the most part, preventable.

The Division of Public Health recognizes that NCDs are not only an epidemic, but a true public health emergency. In spite of our efforts to date, this epidemic has steadily become worse.

The most effective response to NCD's will come from the community, and that a "whole of society" approach is needed. For this reason, the Rota community is urged to attend the community forum, which will allow for open discussion and sharing of ideas on how to effectively combat NCDs on the islands.

The forum is open to the public and everyone is called upon to help fight against NCDs in the CNMI. For more information, contact the Division of Public Health at telephone number 236-8703, 285-3735 or via email at chcpublichealth@gmail.com. Public comments and recommendations are also welcomed by emailing the address above. ***(PR)***

NMC-CREES to host goat workshops

The Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service is inviting members of the community to attend a free workshop to learn about goat management and nutrition on Saipan and Tinian.

The workshop on Saipan will take place on Wednesday, April 18, 2012, in Room D-1 at the NMC As Terlaje campus. The workshop on Tinian is on Friday, April 20, 2012, in Room F at the NMC Tinian Instructional Site.

Lecture is from 9am to 12pm, and the field tour and forum is from 1pm to 4pm.

Agricultural extension agent Dr. Manuel Duguies from University of Guam's Cooperative Extension Service, in collaboration with pasture agronomist and animal scientist Dr. Allan Sabaldica of NMC-CREES, will present information on how to care for goats and goat breeding.

For more information, contact NMC-CREES at 234-5498 ext. 1707/1708. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

April 18, 2000

Quarantine Office stops smuggling of fruit bats

Department of Lands and Natural Resources Quarantine officers yesterday confiscated seven Fanihi or fruitbats hidden in a cooler owned by a CNMI resident who came from Palau at around 9:00 a.m. The woman, who owned the fruitbats, declared to the quarantine officers that the cooler only contained fish. However, after searching, the officers found the fruitbats carefully wrapped and buried underneath the fishes. Considered an endangered specie by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the maximum penalty for those caught taking fruitbats is five years imprisonment or $10,000 in fine or both. Officials refused to reveal the name of the local resident while investigation is still on going.

CNMI gets help in campaign against Big C

A representative of the American Cancer Society in Hawaii and Pacific is helping the CNMI come up with programs that will promote early detection and prevention of the highly dreaded disease. Eleanor Waterhouse, vice president of unit services and fund raising of the organization's Hawaii Pacific Division, said raising awareness on cancer is the best way to prevent spread of the disease. Cancer, which a few years ago had lower statistics, has become a leading cause of death among the indigenous population—a fact blamed by public health officials on westernized lifestyle adopted by islanders over the years.

April 18, 2001

Legislators pledge funding for Airport Road expansion

The CNMI Legislature has pledged to make funding available for the rehabilitation and expansion of the Saipan Airport Road, an infrastructure project designed to alleviate the facility's poor conditions. Legislators said yesterday that all other help, including technical assistance, will be made available to ensure the project's completion within the year or by the early part of 2002. Commonwealth Ports Authority officials met with legislators headed by House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Chair Rosiky Camacho to tackle redesigning of the dilapidated Airport Road.

NMC eyes deal with California university

Accessibility to higher education for local students is getting closer and closer to home. Besides the Northern Marianas College's forthcoming plan to offer a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree this Fall, it is also embarking on collaborative efforts with the San Diego State University on various bachelors and masters degree programs. The articulation agreement between the two institutions is eyed as a golden opportunity for locally-based working students to further their education in several fields of discipline.

April 18, 2002

Speaker bats for tourism plan funding

With a price tag of $2.25 million, the CNMI Tourism Strategy Plan could end up as one of the more expensive promotional campaign of the Commonwealth, but House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider appealed to lawmakers yesterday to support the plan as a means to achieve the goal of bringing in 100,000 more Japanese tourists in 2002. "The Governor has already submitted the plans that the Strategic Tourism Planning Committee came up with. I would like to ask for your support for this plan, particularly since time is of the essence. This plan has to be implemented this year so your immediate action is needed to put this plan into motion," said Hofschneider.

Making ends meet for government

Of the $216.68 million in projected resources for Fiscal Year 2003, only $210.8 million will be available for general appropriation since over $5.87 million would go toward paying off the government's Capital Improvement Program bond obligations. This was disclosed by acting Finance Secretary Frank B. Villanueva in a letter addressed to Gov. Juan N. Babauta on the projected budget situation of the Commonwealth in the next fiscal year. "Of the total estimated resources [$216.98 million], $2 million is reserved by Public Law 11-14 to pay obligations related to the Public School System CIP financing bonds and $3.87 million is reserved by Public Law 11-102 to pay obligations relating to the $60-million Commonwealth Development Authority CIP financing bonds," Villanueva said.

Island Snapshots

NEW BUSINESS CLARISSA V. DAVID

RE/MAX Paradise Realty owner and broker Joe Ayuyu, third left, and Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, fourth left, lead guests in the ribbon cutting ceremony that marked the grand opening of the newest real estate business on island last Monday.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

RE/MAX Paradise Realty owner and broker Joe Ayuyu, left, is joined by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Mayor Donald Flores, and RE/MAX Diamond Realty associate broker Elizabeth C. Duenas of Guam inside the office of the newly opened business in Dandan on Monday.

PARENTS' SUMMIT MONETH DEPOSA

CNMI Delegate Gregorio Sablan is seen in the panel responding to queries and comments made by Commerce Secretary Sixto K. Igisomar during the two's heated exchanges in Friday's PSS legislative summit for parents held at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan. Others in photo are BOE's Tanya King, Sen. Jovita Taimanao, and Rep. Ramon Basa.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Marcia Ayuyu of RE/MAX Paradise Realty, right, confers with Leonard P. Campos, RE/MAX Micronesia managing director for international development at the grand opening of the local franchise of the number one real estate company in the U.S. on April 16.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Fr. Ike Ayuyu leads the blessing of the newly opened RE/MAX Paradise Realty office in Dandan during the ribbon cutting ceremony on April 16.

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

Happy, happy birthday going out to Joji "Ta Ji" Abarquez who celebrates her birthday today, April 18! Wishing for you to be blessed with many more birthdays to come! Here's to hoping that all your birthday dreams and wishes come true, and that you have a great and wonderful day. Much love coming from your Mahal, Kaia and Rianna Joy, and your entire Salbahe LaFamilia(Afetnas family)!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to Justine "Pao" Del Rosario, who is celebrating his most special of days today, April 18! May this day be filled with love, laughter and happiness that you'll forever cherish! We love you! Greetings come from the family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Junjun Laniyo Richards, who is celebrating his special day today, April 18! May God continue to bless you. We love you! Greetings come from Willy, Iunicia, and the family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday Auntie Anna "Nena" Guerrero! Hope you have an awesome one! Thinking of you on your special day, Baby Joe and Tricia Santos.

Belated happy birthday to Ray Anthony Camacho Peter, who celebrated his special day on April 17! May God continue to bless you! Greetings come from your friends and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Antibiotics, animals and us

The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times *on Friday, April 13:*

Voluntary guidelines for pharmaceutical companies will not wean the livestock industry off its addiction to antibiotics.

Yet that's what the U.S. Food and Drug Administration—which has previously taken tentative steps to curb the agricultural use of antibiotics and is under a judge's order to carry out existing laws that call for limiting the overuse of two classes of antibiotics—is proposing. Obviously, the agency wants to avoid a protracted legal battle with producers, and its authority is limited by Congress' repeated refusal to act. But this latest plan falls far short of the decisive action needed to make a difference.

Most of the antibiotics given to livestock aren't used to treat illness but to quicken the animals' growth or as a preventive measure to keep disease from sweeping through the crowded pens and cages that are common to industrial agriculture. Doctors have been growing more cautious about prescribing antibiotics for humans because overuse fosters the development of drug-resistant bacteria; last month, for example, the Infectious Diseases Society of America called for a drastic reduction in antibiotic use for sinus infections for that reason. That's good, but it is of limited use when three-fourths of the antibiotics in this country are used on livestock whose cost-conscious owners haven't shown equal concern about "superbugs."

This week, the FDA proposed guidelines not for the livestock industry but for the pharmaceutical companies that provide farms and ranches with massive amounts of common antibiotics without prescriptions. The guidelines call on drug companies not to sell the drugs without a veterinarian's prescription or for "non-medical uses." Even if pharmaceutical companies were to comply, despite the considerable loss of sales, this would address only antibiotic use for growth and would not stem the use of the drugs to prevent illness. Because the same drugs are commonly used for both, it's hard to see how this would make a sizable dent in the problem.

If the industry did cut back on antibiotic use, food prices would almost certainly rise, at least somewhat. But as long as the drugs are overused, the public is paying in other ways: More exotic antibiotics—and hospitalizations—are necessary to treat infections that once were readily cured with a bottle of pills. And over time, patients will face serious and possibly fatal illness from bacteria that have outwitted doctors' arsenals.

The FDA contends, with justification, that guidelines would work faster than a ban, which would almost certainly be greeted with multiple lawsuits—potentially one for every drug affected. But moving faster isn't necessarily moving better.

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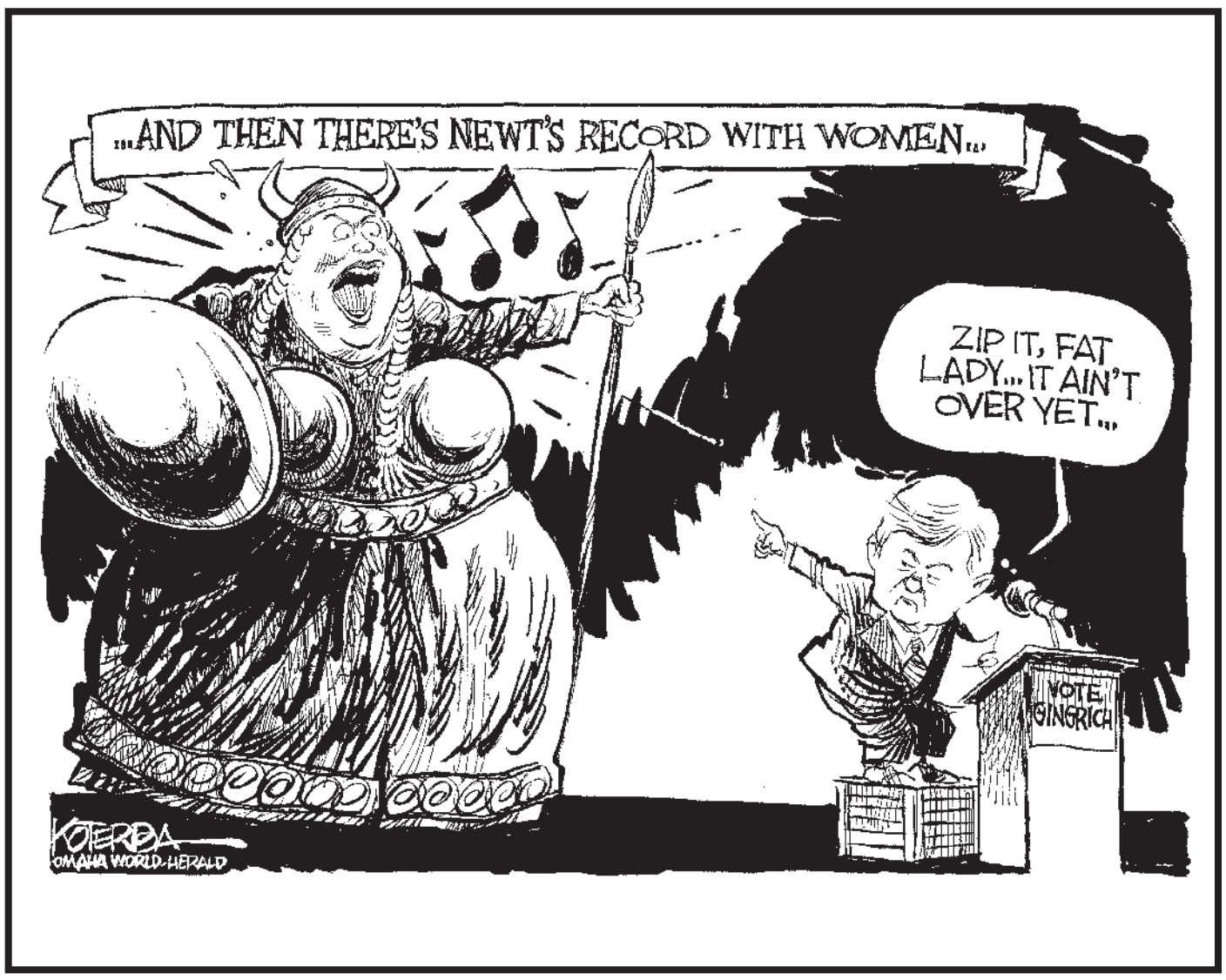


Community colleges' learning disability

By MARK SCHNEIDER and LU MICHELLE YIN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Community colleges are central to the nation's higher education system, enrolling almost 30 percent of all postsecondary students. But their record of success is spotty.

Nationally, only about a quarter of full-time community college students complete their studies within three years (the official measure of a school's graduation rate).

At more than a third of California's community colleges, graduation rates are 20 percent or less. Of the full-time, degree-seeking students who entered California community colleges in 2007, more than 35,000 had not earned their degrees three years later, and most of them were no longer enrolled in any postsecondary institution.

This happens year after year after year, and it's not only the dropouts who are harmed. When students fail to complete their degrees, taxpayers also lose.

Community colleges are subsidized through direct state and local government appropriations and through student grant programs. Every student who drops out represents an investment loss by the taxpayers in that student's uncompleted education.

Because students who complete their degrees earn more money than high school graduates or dropouts, taxpayers win when students graduate. The higher wages they earn as a result generate higher income taxes.

We recently took a hard look at the economics of community colleges and calculated that if the schools could reduce by half the number of students who drop out each year, more than 150,000 more students nationwide would get associate degrees each year. More than 18,000 of those students would be graduating from community colleges in California.

We further calculated that these newly minted community college graduates would earn an additional $1.4 billion in income nationwide, which would translate into an additional $200 million in federal income taxes and $60 million in state income taxes each year. California's share of these added benefits would be large: an additional $100 million in income, more than $16 million in additional dollars in federal income taxes and more than $4 million in additional California income taxes.

The question is: What can be done to make this happen?

We know that the longer a student takes to complete a degree, the more likely it is that something will happen to derail his plans. Many students start at community colleges needing remedial classes to bring them to the point where they can handle college work. One important step to reducing the number of dropouts would be to streamline remediation programs so that students can more quickly get to a level where the classes they take earn them college credits.

Community colleges could expand their online course offerings as well. Online delivery of class content renders the traditional limitations of geographic distance, physical capacity and time moot. Instructors can reach far more students online than in traditional physical classrooms, and online courses can start any day of any week and any week of the year. Online delivery would also significantly lower the costs of providing and attending courses for both community colleges and students.

Another way to reduce the number of dropouts would be to replace a system that awards degrees based on "seat time" with a system that rewards subject mastery. This would allow students to move at their own pace through a course of study, progressing from one concept to the next after passing assessment tests. Competency-based models would allow for the certification of prior learning, speeding time to graduation.

Finally, for-profit institutions embody a host of ideas that community colleges should emulate. Despite being the subject of negative scrutiny over the last year or so, many for-profit colleges are leading the way in developing innovative online learning platforms and redefining an approach to curriculum development and faculty training to encourage uniformity in instruction across multiple sites and instructors. Faculty at the best for-profit institutions are evaluated on the basis of their students' learning outcomes, and promotion and salary decisions are based in part on these metrics. Graduation rates at two-year for-profit institutions are almost three times higher than at public community colleges.

Reforms such as these could transform today's inefficient and costly community college system. These reforms are not necessarily expensive, especially in relation to the tax dollars lost each year through lower income and lower tax collections, as well as the billions of dollars in government appropriations that subsidize the tuition paid by students who fail to graduate.

Mark Schneider is a visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and vice president at the American Institutes for Research. Lu Michelle Yin is an economist and a researcher at the American Institutes for Research. They wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Economy: Anemic or Stage 4 cancer?

By JOHN DELROSARIO
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

In medical parlance, the local economy is no longer anemic. It has contracted cancer and has reached Stage 4—when the lifetime affliction is medically irreversible and where death waits. The family would be formally informed of the condition and begin preparing for the inevitable.

This is where are today in terms of the local economy. I've probed this issue interminably in terms of local leadership's failure and negligence to proactively exercise agility in stemming the onslaught of bankruptcy. Most must have read it but faithfully intoned, "Que sera, sera, whatever will be, will be, the future is..." Wow! What accomplishment in the dual destruction of our livelihood: Bankrupt the local government while hopelessly pinning their hopes on some miracle to turn the mess around.

But then the guys wear two sets of uniform: 1). The NMI is a suspect sovereign country. 2). The Aloha shirt that depicts our geographical origin hailing from afar as humble islanders. Please review Section One of the Covenant Agreement where we surrendered sovereignty. Why don the humble face of an islander only after we've messed things up irreversibly?

Didn't the feds tell states searching for bailouts to return home and make fiscally responsible budget cuts? Do we need to formally hear Uncle Sam repeat the same message to our weak-kneed elected elites? Whatever happened to years of promises to improve the economic lot of local governance? Are we not obligated to stay within our means? Isn't this part and whole of our responsibility to guard against wasteful spending?

Indeed, we've wasted a lot of time grandstanding against Uncle Sam who has the upper hand from the outset. And each time he sends us home with our tails between our legs, we begin posturing heedlessly and uselessly as to call for a renegotiation of the Covenant Agreement. People. isn't it true that we haven't lifted a finger to strengthening our democratic institutions? Isn't it true that we've still have a long ways to go to attain political maturation? Isn't it time to retreat and reassess our future on a realistic basis?

That we've failed to make progressive strides to help ourselves from ourselves confirms that we've been misapplying the art of compromise (politics) in favor of half-cocked answers to major issues requiring the long thoughtful process. I often quiz why the elected elite and appointed lords are fearful of being infected with the virus of reason? Perhaps, none of these disoriented characters is capable of what's known in philosophy as "initial perception" in order to be equipped with the ability to reason. Sad the wind our sails are torn! Is there a doctor in the house, please?

■ ■ ■

The price of negligence

We had the opportunity to make the best of it—stop the NMI from bleeding profusely—as investment funds were flushed out of the gate of *sayonara*. But we were punch drunk with one drink too many and tons of burned meat in our tummy. It's one horrific hangover from a prolonged revenue loss or consistently deepening financial crisis. We're equally inebriated by what lies ahead, wrestling with the inevitable: dystopia!

When we woke up still wobbly from a bad hangover, we learned through news accounts that Japan Airlines has left, Nikko Hotel has been sold, the shutdown of La Fiesta; Laulau Bay has gone to new ownership; Coral Ocean Point struggling under new investors; World Resort has changed ownership too; Rota Resort at the brink of bankruptcy; Holiday Mart has put on shutters; including, most recently Fresh Market; while Tinian Dynasty owes the local government over $30 million in taxes.

The cumulative loss is humongous or where some $5-$7 billion in revenue was flushed out of the Sayonara Gate. A wise businessman related that more businesses would bite the dust for as long as utilities are prohibitively high. And it is still happening even as I write this piece. The lack of real leadership points all roads to the obvious lack of wherewithal or skills by the elected and appointed elite to arrest the steady loss of investment. Some even chanced raising taxes to ensure most businesses think with their feet, heading to jetways.

Today, the CNMI is broke and about the only thing we have in abundance is the long faces of employees with reduced work hours cringing and sighing if Santa Claus could make his CNMI round a little early this Christmas. But St. Nick's calendar is confused after finding out that we've been celebrating Christmas even in June.

■ ■ ■

A simple life

An auntie works six days a week washing and ironing neighborhood clothes for 50 cents a day. She did this for many years. She usually heads home after dark for a restful evening, singing sentimental ballads before calling it a night.

I would listen to the melodic tune and meaningful lyrics. She sang of a distant island up north where she was born. She'd sing of her home perhaps reminiscing of her younger days in a simple setting with other fellow islanders.

She was born on a pristine and majestic isle that boasts of black sand all over an entire strand of what would be white sandy beaches on Saipan. "It was there that I learned the traditional work of a young woman from cooking, washing, ironing, even fishing and gardening."

Where her budget permits, she'd buy the smallest reef fish, cleans, slices them in half then smokes them over the old wooden stove. Her meal is simple: coffee and rice in the morning, a piece of sweet bread in the afternoon and dried fish cooked in coconut milk for supper.

She's agile and works hard everyday. She spends time with visitors going through the wisdom basket with conversations laced with graceful laughter. I'd listen to their conversations for both humor and quizzes I'd ask of words they use that are hardly included in daily conversations.

One day she barbecued some of her smoked fish, made *finadeni'* (sauce, lemon and pepper), rice and asked that I join her. I did as she explains how she became a spiritual person. Rain or otherwise, she'd walk to church every morning and evening to attend Mass and rosaries.

She lived a simple life, no false pretenses and generously helped others in her community, be it village fiesta or family novenas. She was one happy though very humble person. It's a life I yearn for in humility and simplicity when saddled by the pressures and demands of a modern day Northern Marianas community. Gee! Life has changed beyond our wildest imaginings, huh?

■ ■ ■

In his fight with the Senate president, the governor had the gall to declare the meeting is vital "because the people are suffering." He begins to sound like Obama who after three years in office still blames President Bush for his policy inadequacies.

ISLAND VIEWS

Editor's Note: The following mini-essays are written by the students of Mrs. G. C. Borja-Robinson's writing classes at the Northern Marianas College. The views expressed are solely those of the students.

Japan

If I had the opportunity, I would travel to Japan. Japan is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It is very traditional, peaceful, and well known for sightseeing. The food is especially amazing, and there is a lot of variety to choose from. An example is their noodles, a very common food in Japan. There are also popular places to visit. For instance, I want to see what kind of animals they have and what plants they grow. Even the Japanese language is very interesting. I want to study and learn it. Japan is very diverse in many ways. Even though it has one language, words have many meanings to each one. Japan has always been a place I wanted to visit, because it is different and welcoming. It is ironic that I am half Japanese but I do not know much about the culture and the language. To visit Japan would fulfill my dreams. Japan is full of wonders.

The importance of walking

By YUNKYUNG LEE

How many times do you spend walking every week? Any machine will rust if it is not used for a long time. Similarly, our body needs to move every day for good health. Walking is especially good for our health. There are several benefits of walking. One, walking helps prevent osteoporosis. Even with a daily intake of calcium, our muscles will lose calcium easily and the bones get weakened if our muscles are not exercised. To prevent this, it is a good idea to walk. Walking also improves blood circulation. For older adults, walking helps prevent various illnesses. Walking also helps prevent obesity. Its aerobic benefits help the body burn fat.

Walking is a better aerobic exercise than an intensive exercise like jogging. Additionally, walking helps relieve stress. For many people including myself, the biggest benefit to walking is feeling the cool breeze and fresh air while walking. When I walk, I feel like I am one with nature. In today's modern society, people move by car every time. So it is a good idea to start walking soon for good health.

Benefits of swimming

By MARK ARTHUR DEALA

Do you enjoy swimming? Swimming is a good exercise. For professional athletes, swimming is a competitive sport. For non-professional athletes, swimming has important health benefits for your body. When you go swimming, almost all of the muscles in your body work, especially your heart and lungs. Swimming can also build stamina. You can burn a lot of calories when you swim. Summer is only a few months away. Swimming can help your body cool down from the summer heat. One of the benefits of living on Saipan is that the island is surrounded by beautiful beaches. You do not have to travel too far to go swimming. Swimming can also be an activity with family and friends. When you go swimming at a beach or a swimming pool, just remember that you are working out and having fun.

My favorite fruit

By SELENA WANG

Do you like to eat fruit? I like to eat fruit very much, especially the banana. There are several reasons that the banana is my favorite. First, it has a sweet taste that many people enjoy. Secondly, it is convenient. People can carry a banana easily. For instance, when I do not have time to eat breakfast I always take a banana with me. Thirdly, a banana has many vitamins and nutrients. A banana has two times as much carbohydrate as an apple. Finally, a banana is rich in natural sugar. Eating two bananas will give you enough energy to exercise for at least an hour. For me, the banana is my super fruit.

Exercise

By MIKI ITO

Do you exercise several times a week? If you do exercise, what kind of exercise do you do? Also why do you do those exercises? Many people today who work usually sit in front of a computer all day. So they often exercise after work. They realize that a healthy diet is not adequate for good health. They recognize that they need to do some form of regular exercise. There are many exercises that are simple to do. For example, walking, jogging, or jumping rope. These exercises are easy to do regularly, like three or four times a week. I think it is important to exercise regularly each week. I do exercise, too. I walk or jog for 40 minutes three or four times a week. After I walk or jog, I feel refreshed. I also have more energy. So I try to exercise regularly.

Rugby

By ALBERT CEPEDA

Have you ever played rugby? For me, rugby is a fun way to exercise. Rugby has many benefits for good health. It can be a real exercise because there is a lot of running. It can also be a fun sport. Rugby can help you gain more muscle and strength. When you play rugby, you spend a lot of time running and jumping so you use a lot of energy, and that makes you stronger. Rugby can also motivate you to have a healthy diet. When you play, you are out in the field and chasing the ball or running away with the ball. My most memorable time was playing rugby and having fun with my friends.

Letter to the Editor

Justice for our mom

I and my sister Francene would like to thank those who supported and those who helped in the search to find our Mama. We really appreciate all the sympathies and condolences you extended to us. Our great gratitude to our Mama's bosses, Mr. Ron Biggers and Mr. Scott Dottino, who led the search and rescue to save our Mama, to all her co-workers at Godfather's Bar who organized the vigil and fundraising for our Mama and to her loyalfriends there on Saipan who exerted their time and effort just to save our Mama. Our thanks to all who attended the vigil and to all who gave donations and prayers. We also like to thank all the authorities who are helping solve our Mom's case. Our family and relatives here in the Philippines would also like to thank those who participated in the wake of our mom. Lastly, our gratitude to our relatives there on Saipan for helping us in the wake and for not leaving us.

Let's find justice for her. A woman like her doesn't deserve to be treated like that. Let's help each other to arrest that criminal who killed our mom. Your continuous prayers for our Mama will help her soul to lie in peace. Let's not stop 'til our mom gain her justice! Thank you.

Erica and Francene Romero
Daughters of Emie Romero

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼76°	▲88° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°	▲87° ▼76°

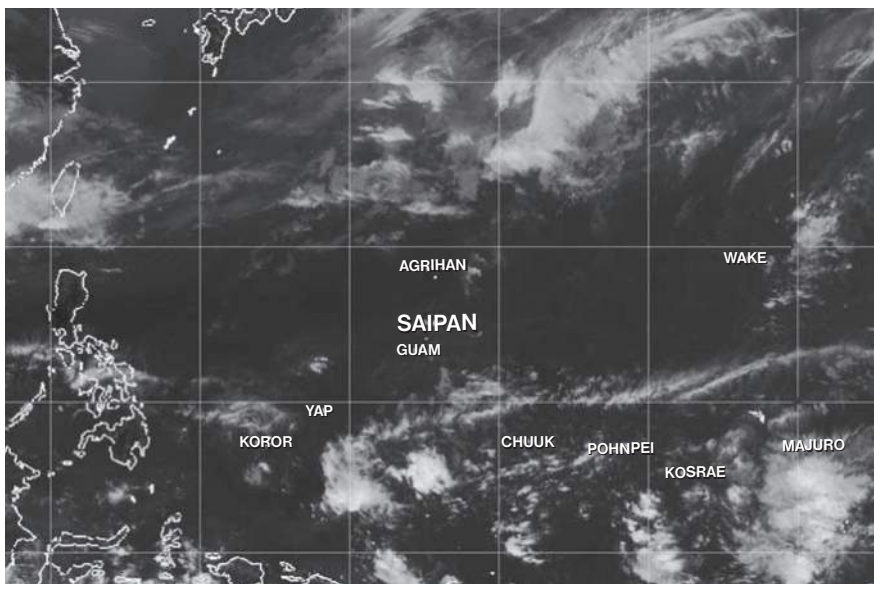
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲89	▼78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼78
Chuuk	Showers	▲90	▼80
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼79
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲65	▼53
Beijing	Cloudy	▲84	▼56
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲80	▼75
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼71
London	Rain	▲51	▼45
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲78	▼56
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲96	▼79
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼56
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲82	▼71
New York	Sunny	▲77	▼48
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲68	▼50
Paris	Showers	▲53	▼46
Pusan	Windy	▲63	▼52
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼53
Salem	Showers	▲56	▼44
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲62	▼50
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲70	▼48
Tokyo	Showers	▲66	▼52
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲75	▼56

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2012
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Low-level convergence south of a warm front is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms well north of the CNMI north of a line from 23N134E to 23N147E to 25N160E. A surface trough south of Guam extends from 3N143E to 11N143E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found southeast of Yap between 2N and 8N from 138E to 147E. Trade-wind convergence is producing isolated thunderstorms south of Chuuk and Pohnpei south of a line from 6N150E to 7N157E to 3N162E. A trade-wind disturbance over the southern Marshall islands, Tarawa and Butaritari is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of a line from 7N165E to 7N174E. Converging southeast winds and upper-level divergence are triggering a few thunderstorms east of Wake Island within 120 miles of a line from 15N168E to 22N171E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:41 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
6:51 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
1:27 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet
7:23 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:01 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM
Friday	6:00 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	5:59 AM	6:32 PM
Sunday	5:59 AM	6:33 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:43 AM	4:06 PM
Thursday	4:20 AM	4:54 PM
Friday	4:58 AM	5:42 PM
Saturday	5:37 AM	6:30 PM
Sunday	6:17 AM	7:19 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 11, 2012

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)				**ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)**			
C05062	2:10am	2:40am	1, 5	C05064	5:15am	5:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)				**ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)**			
C05064	4:15am	4:50am	1, 5	C05062	3:10am	3:45am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
C05064	4:15am	5:45am	1, 5 via ROP	C05062	2:10am	3:45am	1, 5 via ROP
C05070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	C05069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
C05068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily	C05071	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C05074	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7	C05073	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05076	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05075	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C05078	6:50pm	7:40pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05077	5:30pm	6:20pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05078	7:00pm	7:50pm	3, 6	C05077	5:40pm	6:30pm	3, 6
C05072	9:55pm	10:45pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	C05079	8:35pm	9:25pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 7
C05072	10:05pm	10:55pm	3, 6	C05079	8:45pm	9:35pm	3, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				**NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN**			
DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL285	6:35am	9:15am	1, 3, 5, 7	DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily
DL297	4:25pm	7:15pm	Daily	DL286	7:40pm	12:20am+1	2, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX)				**OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN**			
OZ119	4:00am	6:40am	Daily	OZ120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				**SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN**			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via KIX
OZ119	4:00am	11:20am	Daily via KIX	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				**BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN**			
OZ608	3:35am	7:05am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	3, 6
DL581	4:10am	7:30am	1, 5	DL580	10:10pm	2:55am+1	4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)				**GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN**			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				**SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN**			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				**MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN**			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	C0190/5077	10:55am	6:30pm	3, 6 via GUM
				C0190/5079	10:55am	9:35pm	3, 6 via GUM
C05070/191	4:35am	9:45am	3, 6 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
DL287/173	6:00am	10:25pm	Daily via NRT	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
C05068/183	8:25am	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM				
C05068/183	8:25am	9:40pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/C05071	10:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM	C0192/5071	10:25pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM-Palau
C05076/183	3:10pm	9:40pm	1, 4, 7 via GUM	C0184/5071	11:10pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
C05076/193	3:10pm	11:00pm	2, 5 via GUM-Palau	OZ704/603	11:40pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN	C0184/5071	11:59pm	7:50am+1	2, 5 via GUM
C05072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 5, 7 via GUM				
C05072/PR111	10:05pm	7:50am+1	3, 6 via GUM				
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				**HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN**			
OZ606/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN	OZ724/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:00am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
				OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
C05076/147	3:10pm	10:25pm	1, 5 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ604/723	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN				
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:50pm	Daily via ICN	C0180/5071	11:15pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

US economic outlook brightens as retail sales rise

WASHINGTON (AP)—Americans bought more electronics, started home improvement projects and updated their wardrobes last month, inspired by warmer weather and a healthier job market.

Retail sales rose 0.8 percent in March, the Commerce Department said Monday. The gain capped a strong quarter for retail spending, which is contributing to a brighter outlook among economists for growth in the January-March quarter.

Businesses are responding to the higher sales by restocking their shelves at a steady pace, a sign that they expect the trend to carry over into the spring.

More retail spending also helped offset a decline in confidence among homebuilders. And it could ease concerns about March hiring, which slowed to half the pace of the previous three months.

"Retail sales soared in March with stores in just about every category recording sharp increases over February levels," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors. "And let's not forget, the February spending was strong."

AP

In this March 12, 2012 photo, a shopper loads bags of recently purchased merchandise into the back of her car in Freeport, Maine.

The retail sales report is the government's first look at consumer spending each month. The gain contributed to a mixed day of trading on Wall Street.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed up roughly 72 points to end the day at 12,921. But the Standard & Poor's 500 index ended the day essentially flat, while the Nasdaq composite fell 23 points.

Americans are spending more despite paying higher gas prices and seeing little growth in their wages.

Shoppers bought more furniture, groceries, clothes and sporting goods last month. They also paid more for gas.

Still, excluding cars, gas and food, sales rose 8.2 percent in the first quarter, the most in two years.

The gain pushed total retail sales to a record high of $411.1 billion, 24 percent higher than the recession low hit in March 2009.

"This is a good report," said Chris Christopher, an economist at IHS Global Insight. "Consumers are spending despite feeling the pump price pinch."

Other recent data suggest stronger growth in the January-March quarter.

Business stockpiles rose a seasonally adjusted 0.6 percent in February, the Commerce Department said in a separate report Monday.

Larger stockpiles require businesses to order more goods. That leads to more factory production, which boosts growth.

And overall sales—which includes wholesalers and manufacturers as well as retailers—grew 0.7 percent, more than inventories. That's a good sign because it is evidence that companies aren't building too much inventory, which can lead to production cutbacks.

James Marple, an economist at TD Bank, forecasts the economy expanded at an annual pace of 2.7 percent in the January-March quarter. That's a full point higher than his estimate a month ago. Still, the housing market has struggled to gain momentum.

The National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo said in a third report Monday that its builder sentiment index fell for the first time in seven months.

Builders also expressed weaker confidence in sales over the next six months.

"What we're seeing is essentially a pause in what had been a fairly rapid buildup in builder confidence that started last September," said David Crowe, chief economist with the homebuilders' group. "This is partly because interest expressed by buyers in the past few months has yet to translate into expected sales activity."

Also, an index measuring manufacturing activity in New York fell to its lowest level in five months. The New York Federal Reserve Bank's Empire State survey fell to 6.6 in April from 20.2 in the previous month.

Rebates to cut price of $60 LED bulb

NEW YORK (AP)—How much would you pay for an amazing, state-of-the-art light bulb? Shoppers will be asking themselves that very question at Home Depot and other outlets starting Sunday—Earth Day—when the bulb that won a $10 million government contest goes on sale.

The bulb is the most energy-efficient yet, lasts about 20 years and is supposed to give off a pleasing, natural-looking light. But what separates it from the pack most is the price: $60.

AP

This product image provided by Philips shows a state-of-the-art LED light bulb.

That price reflects the cost of the components, especially the top-notch chips, or diodes, that give off the light, and is the price commercial customers will pay. But the manufacturer, Netherlands-based Philips, is discounting it right away to $50 for consumers, and working on deals with electric utilities to discount it even further, by as much as $20 to $30.

This means the bulb will cost anywhere from $20 to $60, depending on where it's found. Online, consumers will be paying $50 for each bulb, because utilities don't subsidize online sales.

Congress launched the L Prize contest in 2007, with the goal of creating a bulb to replace the standard, energy-wasting "incandescent" 60-watt bulb. The requirements were rigorous, and Philips was the only entrant. Its bulb was declared the winner last year, after a year and a half of testing. The contest stipulated that the winning bulb be sold for $22 in its first year on the market.

In that context, the $60 price tag has raised some eyebrows. Ed Crawford, the head of Philips' U.S. lighting division, said it was always part of the plan to have utility rebates bring the price down to the $22 range.

Think tank: Russia, China boost arms spending

STOCKHOLM (AP)—The global financial crisis hit military spending in the U.S. and Europe last year, while Russia and China kept increasing their spending on weapons, a leading think tank said Tuesday.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute says budget cuts kept worldwide military expenditures nearly flat at 0.3 percent in 2011, marking an end to an 11-year trend of growing arms spending.

Russia overtook Britain and France to become the world's third largest arms spender, to the tune of some $8 billion—a 9.3 percent increase over 2010.

China also boosted its purchases by 6.7 percent to around $143 billion, remaining the world's second largest arms investor.

The world's leading arms buyer, the United States, cut military expenditure by 1.2 percent to $711 billion, while Europe marginally increased its spending to $407 billion.

"The aftereffects of the global economic crisis, especially deficit-reduction measures in USA and Europe, have finally brought the decade-long rise in military spending to a halt—at least for now," said Sam Perlo-Freeman, head of SIPRI's Military Expenditure Project.

Last year, six of the world's top military spenders—Brazil, France, Germany, India, Britain and the U.S.—cut their military budgets.

One of the key reasons for the slight U.S. decline was the long delay in Congress agreeing on a 2011 budget as the Obama administration clashed with Republicans over measures to reduce the deficit, SIPRI said.

The institute expects American arms spending to continue falling due to the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, the drawdown of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, and the Budget Control Act, passed by Congress last year.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Japan pledges $60 billion to IMF for Europe

TOKYO (AP)—Japan pledged $60 billion in loans to the International Monetary Fund Tuesday in an effort to ensure that the debt crisis in some European economies won't spread. Japanese Finance Minister Jun Azumi announced the emergency loan, which will use the nation's foreign exchange reserves, his ministry said. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde welcomed the move and encouraged other fund members to do the same. "This is an important step forward in the ongoing international effort to strengthen the adequacy of the global resources available to prevent and fight crises and to promote global economic stability," Lagarde said in a statement.

Wal-Mart's CEO paid $18.1 million in 2011

NEW YORK (AP)—Mike Duke, the CEO of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., received a pay package in 2011 worth $18.1 million, a 3 percent dip from the year before, according to an Associated Press calculation, mainly because his performance-based cash bonus shrank. The dip in compensation came even as Wal-Mart reversed a more than two-year sales slump in its namesake business as it emphasized low prices across the store and restored thousands of items that it had culled during its campaign three years ago to declutter its stores. Duke, 62, who has been Wal-Mart's CEO since February 2009, received a base salary of $1.3 million, up almost 3 percent, and stock awards worth $13.1 million, up 3 percent from fiscal 2010.

American Jim Yong Kim is chosen to lead World Bank

WASHINGTON (AP)—Jim Yong Kim, an American who is president of Dartmouth College, has been chosen to be the next president of the World Bank. His selection extends the U.S. hold on the top job at the 187-nation development agency. Kim, a surprise nominee of President Barack Obama, was selected Monday in a vote by the World Bank's 25-member executive board. He'll succeed Robert Zoellick, who's stepping down after a five year term. Developing nations waged an unsuccessful challenge to Kim, 52, a physician and pioneer in treating HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in the developing world.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
12,921.40	1,369.57	2,988.40
71.82	-0.69	-22.93
0.56%	-0.05%	-0.76%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	0.9694	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7628	Philippine Peso	42.7400
British Pound	0.6300	Indian Rupee	51.5520	Singapore Dollar	1.2524
Canadian Dollar	1.0004	Indonesian Rupiah	9,183.00	South Korean Won	1,140.04
Chinese Yuan	6.3081	Japanese Yen	80.4100	Swiss Franc	0.9172
Euro	0.7628	Malaysian Ringgit	3.0655	Taiwan Dollar	29.5150
		New Zealand Dollar	1.2260	Thailand Baht	30.8400

Nation

Dempsey: Military embarrassed by Colombia scandal

WASHINGTON (AP)—The top U.S. military officer said Monday the nation's military leadership is embarrassed by allegations of misconduct against at least 10 U.S. military members at a Colombia hotel on the eve of President Barack Obama's visit over the weekend.

"We let the boss down," Army Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Pentagon news conference. He said he regretted that the scandal, which also involved 11 Secret Service agents accused of cavorting with prostitutes at the hotel, diverted attention from Obama's diplomacy at a Latin America summit.

"I can speak for myself and my fellow chiefs: We're embarrassed by what occurred in Colombia, though we're not sure exactly what it is," Dempsey added.

Pentagon officials said earlier Monday that the number of military members involved in the scandal appears to be greater than the five originally cited. One senior defense official said that at least 10 military members may have been involved. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the matter is under investigation.

AP

President Barack Obama speaks during a joint news conference with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos during the 6th Summit of the Americas in Cartagena, Colombia, Sunday, April 15, 2012.

Pentagon press secretary George Little said that military members who are being investigated were assigned to support the Secret Service in preparation for Obama's official visit to Cartagena. He said they were not directly involved in presidential security.

The Secret Service sent 11 of its members, a group including agents and uniformed officers, home from Colombia amid allegations that they had hired prostitutes at a Cartagena hotel. The military members being investigated were staying at the same hotel, Little said.

The Secret Service personnel were placed on administrative leave and on Monday the Secret Service announced that the agency had also revoked thier security clearances. That means they cannot enter Secret Service facilities or facilities guarded by the Secret Service, said agency spokesman Brian Leary.

Though on leave, the agents and officers will continue to be paid.

Appearing with Dempsey at the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said U.S. troops are expected to abide by "the highest standards" of behavior whether they are at home or abroad. He noted that a military investigation is under way and promised that if wrongdoing is confirmed, "these individuals will be held accountable."

Army Col. Scott Malcom, chief spokesman for U.S. Southern Command, which organized the military team that was assigned to support the Secret Service's mission in Cartagena, declined to say how many additional service members are under investigation. He also would not say which branch of the military they were from.

"We are still putting together all the facts," Malcom said.

A defense official in Washington said at least some of those under investigation are members of the Army. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the matter is under active investigation.

Malcom said a colonel from the Southern Command staff, whom he would not identify by name, had been sent to Cartagena to gather facts. He said at least five military members under investigation were being flown to Miami on Monday.

The U.S. Southern Command had announced on Saturday that five service members assigned to the presidential mission in Colombia had violated curfew and may have been involved in "inappropriate conduct."

In a statement Saturday, Air Force Gen. Douglas Fraser, commander of Southern Command, said he was "disappointed by the entire incident" and that "this behavior is not in keeping with the professional standards expected of members of the United States military."

GOP derails Senate 'Buffett rule' taxes on wealthy

WASHINGTON (AP)—Senate Republicans derailed a Democratic "Buffett rule" bill Monday forcing the nation's top earners to pay at least 30 percent of their income in taxes, using the day before Americans' taxes are due to defy President Barack Obama on one of his signature election-year issues.

By a near party-line 51-45 tally, senators voted to keep the bill alive but fell nine votes short of the 60 needed to continue debating the measure. The anti-climactic outcome was no surprise to anyone in a vote that was designed more to win over voters and embarrass senators in close races than to push legislation into law.

At the White House, Obama denounced the vote, saying Republicans chose "once again to protect tax breaks for the wealthiest few Americans at the expense of the middle class." In a statement issued after the vote, he said he would keep pressing Congress to help the middle class.

"It's just plain wrong that millions of middle-class Americans pay a higher share of their income in taxes than some millionaires and billionaires," he said.

Republicans called the measure a divisive Democratic distraction from the nation's real problems that would not address the economy's real woes.

"This legislation will do nothing with regard to job creation, with regard to gas prices, with regard to economic recovery," said Sen. Jon Kyl of Arizona, the No. 2 Senate GOP leader.

Democrats' goal, he said, was "to try to draw attention away from the issues that the American people are most concerned about."

Sen. Susan Collins of Maine was the only Republican to join Democrats in voting to keep the measure alive, arguing that it was a way to begin considering a badly needed, broad revamping of the entire tax code.

The lone defecting Democrat was Sen. Mark Pryor of Arkansas, who said making the rich pay a fair share of taxes should occur as part of an overall tax overhaul, "not as a political ploy meant to score points."

Monday's vote was the first time a "Buffett rule" proposal has come to a Senate vote this election year, though Democrats have tried unsuccessfully in recent months to impose modest surcharges on the income of the wealthy.

With presidential and congressional elections approaching in November, it was also a microcosm of the broader battle the two parties are waging over an economy that is still having a tough time creating enough new jobs. And the fight isn't confined to the Senate floor.

On Thursday, the House plans to vote on a plan by House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., to provide 20 percent tax deductions to all businesses with fewer than 500 workers—a threshold that includes 99.9 percent of all U.S. companies.

Republicans say that plan would spur job creation, while Democrats call it a giveaway to business because firms would not have to hire employees to receive the reduction. That bill is expected to pass the GOP-run House but die in the Democratic-led Senate.

Boy to school officials: Mom, sister dead at home

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A 9-year-old boy arrived at school Monday with a grisly story: His mother and sister were dead at their home four blocks away.

Minutes later, police found the bodies of a 10-year-old girl and her mother—along with a blood-covered father and an unharmed 4-year-old boy—in a modest home in a West Las Vegas neighborhood, authorities said.

The five people belonged to a single family, police Officer Jacinto Rivera said.

The man, who was hospitalized with a head injury, was not immediately identified as a suspect or charged.

Police wouldn't immediately say how or when the slayings occurred, but Rivera said there was no immediate evidence of a break-in at the home or that a suspect was on the loose.

One neighbor, Lucinda Jackson Griffith, said she heard at least one gunshot early Monday.

Longtime neighbor, Dick Webb, said he had walked past the home less than 90 minutes before the boy arrived at school. He said he didn't notice anything amiss.

Rivera called it too early in the investigation to determine a motive, and said investigators were working carefully to collect evidence inside the single-story stucco home with a motorcycle and two sport utility vehicles in the driveway.

"We get one shot at a homicide scene. Our No. 1 priority is to find out what happened," the police spokesman said. "Right now we don't know what happened."

Clark County spokesman Erik Pappa said the 4-year-old and 9-year-old boys were in the custody of child protective services because they didn't have an adult caregiver.

Clark County Department of Family Services officials planned to try to locate other relatives before placing the boys together with a foster family, department spokeswoman Christine Skorupski said.

Police cordoned off the entire block near the home during their investigation.

Officials said the boy was uninjured when he arrived at Mabel Hoggard Elementary School, where his older sister also was enrolled.

Principal Celese Rayford declined comment.

Clark County School District spokeswoman Amanda Fulkerson wouldn't describe how or what the boy told school officials, or whether other students were told what happened.

Romney veep search under way

BOSTON (AP)—Don't look for a vice presidential shocker from Mitt Romney. His choice of a running-mate—a search he announced Monday he has begun—will be guided by both his methodical, risk-averse corporate training and the lessons his party learned from Sarah Palin's selection.

Preparedness to serve and loyalty to Romney are likely to trump other credentials as the all-but-sure Republican nominee looks to avoid the blowback John McCain faced four years ago with his surprise choice of the little-known, first-term Alaska governor for the GOP ticket. Questions about Palin's readiness to serve, McCain's decision-making and his advisers' vetting came to define the Arizona senator's flawed campaign.

Mindful of that, Romney will put experience at the top of his list of qualities as he chooses a No. 2, according to senior advisers and GOP operatives familiar with his thinking. They spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak candidly about a process Romney himself is trying to keep as private as possible as he works to narrow a field that may begin with as many as a dozen prospective candidates.

"The hallmark for Governor Romney's candidacy, and how he would be as president, is that he approaches these decisions in a well-thought-out methodical way," said Steve Duprey, a former McCain adviser and current New Hampshire-based member of the Republican National Committee. "It won't be like the McCain campaign where there was a big surprise and effort to create a game changer."

For all the secrecy surrounding the process, the former Massachusetts governor did give a few hints about his plans Monday, disclosing that he had chosen his former chief of staff and 2008 presidential campaign manager, Beth Myers, to lead the vetting and analysis of prospective running mates. Several other members of the tight-knit cadre that has surrounded Romney for years also are likely to be involved.

Romney was largely tight-lipped beyond the staffing announcement. He said the selection would certainly happen before the Republican National Convention in late August. But he wouldn't provide any more guidance on any internal deadline his team has set. And when asked about potential choices—and Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, specifically—Romney hedged, as he has consistently in recent months.

"Well I think he's one of the terrific leaders in our party, but I think it's way too early to begin narrowing down who the potential vice presidential nominees might be," Romney said in an interview with Diane Sawyer of ABC News outside Fenway Park in Boston. "But we're beginning that process, we'll talk about a lot of folks, and then go through he kind of vetting and review process that you have to go through to make sure whoever you select will pass the evaluation that's required by the American people."

Asia

As ice cap melts, militaries vie for Arctic edge

YOKOSUKA, Japan (AP)—To the world's military leaders, the debate over climate change is long over. They are preparing for a new kind of Cold War in the Arctic, anticipating that rising temperatures there will open up a treasure trove of resources, long-dreamed-of sea lanes and a slew of potential conflicts.

By Arctic standards, the region is already buzzing with military activity, and experts believe that will increase significantly in the years ahead.

Last month, Norway wrapped up one of the largest Arctic maneuvers ever—Exercise Cold Response—with 16,300 troops from 14 countries training on the ice for everything from high intensity warfare to terror threats. Attesting to the harsh conditions, five Norwegian troops were killed when their C-130 Hercules aircraft crashed near the summit of Kebnekaise, Sweden's highest mountain.

The U.S., Canada and Denmark held major exercises two months ago, and in an unprecedented move, the military chiefs of the eight main Arctic powers—Canada, the U.S., Russia, Iceland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland—gathered at a Canadian military base last week to specifically discuss regional security issues.

None of this means a shooting war is likely at the North Pole any time soon. But as the number of workers and ships increases in the High North to exploit oil and gas reserves, so will the need for policing, border patrols and—if push comes to shove—military muscle to enforce rival claims.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that 13 percent of the world's undiscovered oil and 30 percent of its untapped natural gas is in the Arctic. Shipping lanes could be regularly open across the Arctic by 2030 as rising temperatures continue to melt the sea ice, according to a National Research Council analysis commissioned by the U.S. Navy last year.

What countries should do about climate change remains a heated political debate. But that has not stopped north-looking militaries from moving ahead with strategies that assume current trends will continue.

Russia, Canada and the United States have the biggest stakes in the Arctic. With its military budget stretched thin by Iraq, Afghanistan and more pressing issues elsewhere, the United States has been something of a reluctant northern power, though its nuclear-powered submarine fleet, which can navigate for months underwater and below the ice cap, remains second to none.

Russia—one-third of which lies within the Arctic Circle—has been the most aggressive in establishing itself as the emerging region's superpower.

Rob Huebert, an associate political science professor at the University of Calgary in Canada, said Russia has recovered enough from its economic troubles of the 1990s to significantly rebuild its Arctic military capabilities, which were a key to the overall Cold War strategy of the Soviet Union, and has increased its bomber patrols and submarine activity.

He said that has in turn led other Arctic countries—Norway, Denmark and Canada—to resume regional military exercises that they had abandoned or cut back on after the Soviet collapse. Even non-Arctic nations such as France have expressed interest in deploying their militaries to the Arctic.

"We have an entire ocean region that had previously been closed to the world now opening up," Huebert said. "There are numerous factors now coming together that are mutually reinforcing themselves, causing a buildup of military capabilities in the region. This is only going to increase as time goes on."

Noting that the Arctic is warming twice as fast as the rest of the globe, the U.S. Navy in 2009 announced a beefed-up Arctic Roadmap by its own task force on climate change that called for a three-stage strategy to increase readiness, build cooperative relations with Arctic nations and identify areas of potential conflict.

In this March 19, 2011 photo released by the U.S. Navy, crew members look out from the USS *Connecticut*, a Sea Wolf-class nuclear submarine, after it surfaced through ice in the Arctic Ocean. AP

ASIA BRIEFS

US, Filipino troops start drills near disputed sea

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Nearly 7,000 American and Filipino troops began annual military exercises Monday that will include combat drills near disputed South China Sea waters. U.S. and Philippine officials stressed that China, which in the past has protested military exercises involving American forces near the contested region, was not an imaginary target in the drills. They said the Balikatan—Tagalog for shoulder-to-shoulder—exercises would mostly focus on humanitarian missions and disaster preparedness but would also include combat maneuvers including the mock retaking of an oil rig supposedly seized by terrorists near the South China Sea.

US diplomat: NKorea rocket threatens security

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The top U.S. diplomat for East Asia called a failed North Korean rocket launch a security threat Monday. He declined to talk about possible punishing sanctions but said the world would unite to stop more provocations. Three days after the long-range rocket broke into pieces over the Yellow Sea shortly after liftoff, generating international condemnation and costing North Korea a food aid-for-nuclear freeze deal with Washington, Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell was carefully diplomatic in comments to reporters at Seoul's Foreign Ministry. Tough sanctions haven't stopped North Korea in recent years from conducting two nuclear tests and four long-range rocket launches that Washington calls covers for tests of missile technology designed to reach the United States.

Cardboard cathedral planned in New Zealand

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A cathedral made from cardboard. The idea may sound flimsy, particularly given that cathedrals tend to be known for their solid presence: the flying buttresses, the soaring domes, the Gothic grandeur. But in the earthquake-devastated city of Christchurch, Anglican leaders believe it will deliver both a temporary solution and a statement about the city's recovery. On Monday, they announced plans to build a 25-meter (82-foot) high cathedral constructed with 104 tubes of cardboard. The structure will be a temporary replacement for the iconic stone ChristChurch Cathedral, which was ruined last year in an earthquake that killed 185 people and destroyed much of the downtown.

US prepares for last major Afghan offensive

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—For Taliban militants and U.S. strategists alike, all roads in this impoverished country of mountain passes, arid deserts and nearly impassable goat tracks lead to this ancient capital of 3 million people nestled in a high and narrow valley.

The Taliban made their intentions clear over the weekend, mounting spectacular coordinated attacks that spawned an 18-hour battle with Afghan and NATO forces. And now, the U.S. is gearing up for what may be the last major American-run offensive of the war—a bid to secure the approaches to the city.

While bombings and shootings elsewhere in Afghanistan receive relatively little attention, attacks in the capital alarm the general population, undermine the government's reputation and frighten foreigners into fleeing the country. That's why insurgents on Sunday struck locations that were so fortified they could cause little or no damage, including the diplomatic quarter, the parliament and a NATO base.

"These are isolated attacks that are done for symbolic purposes, and they have not regained any territory," U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Monday.

The U.S.-led spring offensive, expected to begin in the coming weeks, may be NATO's last chance to shore up Kabul's defenses before a significant withdrawal of combat troops limits its options. The focus will be regions that control the main access routes, roads and highways into Kabul from the desert south and the mountainous east. These routes are used not only by militants but by traders carrying goods from Pakistan and Iran.

The strategy in eastern Afghanistan involves clearing militants from provinces such as Ghazni, just south of the capital. The pivotal region links Kabul with the Taliban homeland in the south and provinces bordering Pakistan to the east.

NATO, under U.S. command, will also conduct more operations in eastern provinces such as Paktika and Paktia that are considered major infiltration routes to the capital from insurgent safe havens in Pakistan.

Video shows dramatic details of Tibetan immolation

BEIJING (AP)—Video obtained by an overseas pro-Tibet group shows Chinese security forces beating a man who had set himself on fire in one of several self-immolations by Tibetans protesting Chinese rule.

The Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet says the 45-second video it released Tuesday shows the self-immolation of Losang Jamyang in January in the west China town of Aba.

The footage shows a crowd gathering around a man who suddenly explodes into flames and leaps around. Riot police close in, and an officer uses a pushcart to knock the man down. Other police seem to kick the man after he falls and then blast him with fire extinguishers.

Thirty-two people have set themselves on fire in Tibetan areas over the past year to draw attention to China's restrictions on Buddhism and call for the return from exile of their leader, the Dalai Lama.

A woman surnamed Luo at Aba prefecture's Communist Party propaganda department referred questions to reports by China's official news agencies, saying she was not authorized to speak to the media.

Chinese authorities have confirmed some of the self-immolations—largely through reports by the state-run Xinhua News Agency—but not all.

Heavy security has turned Aba and the surrounding area into a virtual restricted zone since an anti-government uprising across Tibetan communities in 2008, and foreign reporters have had little or no access.

World

Argentine leader moves to nationalize oil company

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP)—In a bold move to gain control of Argentina's energy reserves, President Cristina Fernandez pushed forward a bill to renationalize the country's largest oil company on Monday despite fierce criticism from abroad and the risk of a major rift with Spain.

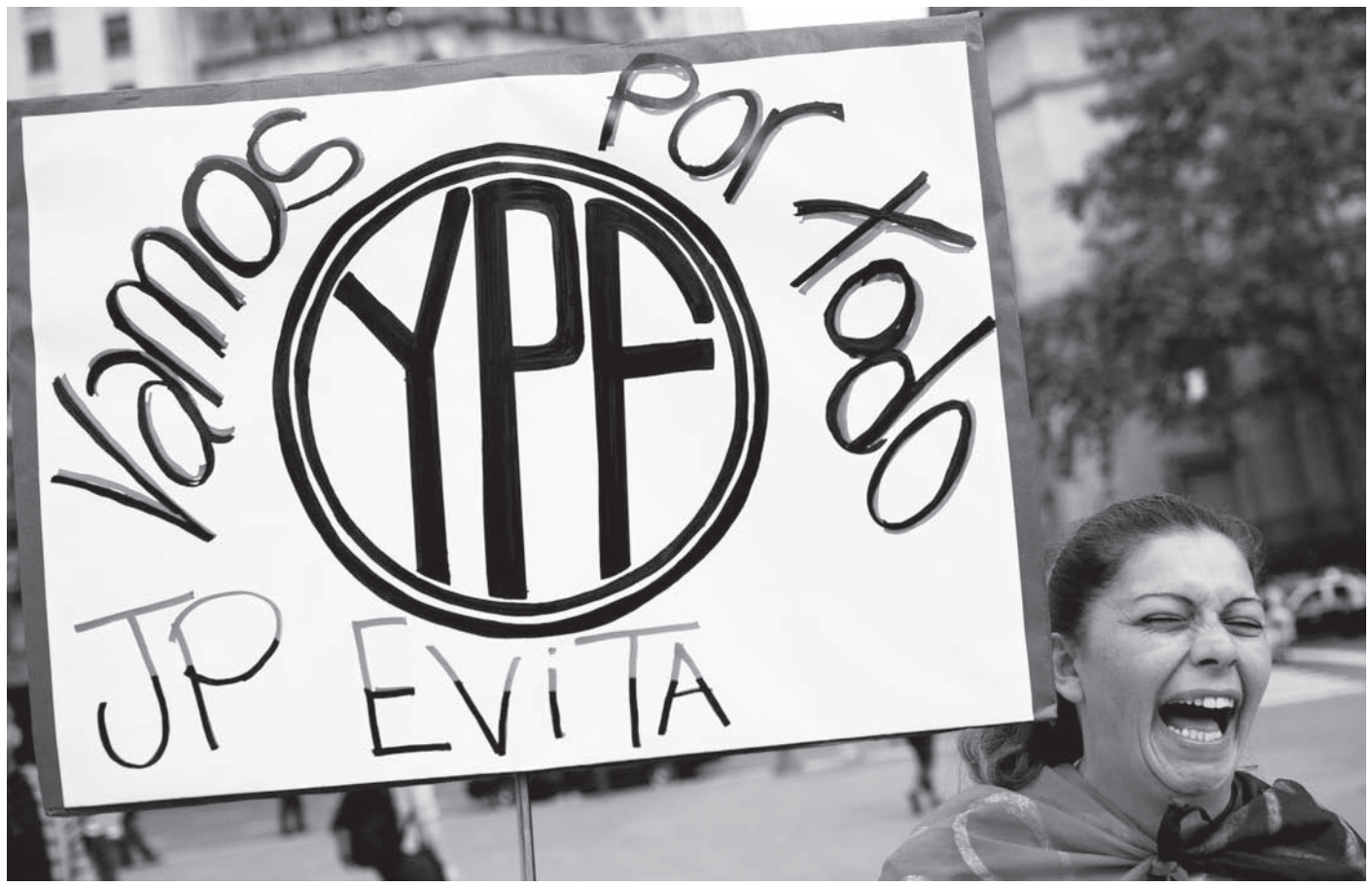
In a national address, Fernandez said the legislation put to congress would give Argentina a majority stake in oil and gas company YPF by taking control of 51 percent of its shares currently held by Spain's Repsol.

Both Repsol and Spain strongly oppose the move and have warned that it could turn Argentina into an international pariah.

YPF is vital for Argentina's energy future, especially after its recent find of huge unconventional oil and natural gas reserves. But the company is under pressure from Fernandez's government to raise output while its shares have plunged in recent months on fears of possible state intervention. Argentina this year expects to import more than $10 billion worth of gas and natural liquid gas to address an energy crisis even though it is an oil-producing nation, according to estimates from the hydrocarbon sector.

"We are the only country in Latin America, and I would say in practically the entire world, that doesn't manage its own natural resources," Fernandez said. She said her proposal "is not a model of statism" but "the recovery of sovereignty."

Critics blame the government for an energy shortage and high gasoline prices. But Fernandez said the shortage is the result of Repsol's "emptying" of YPF, and that Argentina had a deficit of $3 billion last year partly due to energy imports.



AP

A woman holds up a banner that reads in Spanish "We are going for all YPF" during a demonstration in support of a bill proposed by Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez outside the government house in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Monday, April 16, 2012.

Argentines gathered in Buenos Aires' main square shouting slogans, waving national flags and carrying banners supporting the government takeover. One of them read: "Today, with Cristina, we recovered YPF." YPF was privatized in the 1990s. Repsol's subsidiary in Argentina holds 57 percent of YPF's shares.

Fernandez said the renationalization was a long-held desire of her late husband and predecessor, former President Nestor Kirchner.

"I hope he's watching over me because he always wanted to recover YPF for the country," she said.

But analysts said the planned takeover risks alienating foreign investors and prompting retaliation from Spain's government.

"It is a bad decision," said Emilio Apud, a former Argentine energy secretary who now works as a consultant. "It gives the Argentine government a bad image" and will discourage investment, he said. Apud also called the proposed law "a bad way to treat friendly governments like Spain."

In Madrid, Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo called the move arbitrary, and said it broke the climate of cordiality and friendship that had existed with Argentina. He said Spain would respond with "forceful measures" he did not describe.

The European Commission has warned that nationalizing YPF would be bad for the investment climate in Argentina, and has said it backs Spain in the standoff over the subsidiary.

Fernandez, however, was unmoved by the risk of a row with Spain, Argentina's largest foreign investor.

Norway's mass killer's tears not 'out of pity'

OSLO, Norway (AP)—Anders Behring Breivik shed tears as he went on trial for killing 77 people—but not for his victims. The emotional display came when prosecutors showed his anti-Muslim video.

Dressed in a dark suit and sporting a thin beard, the right-wing fanatic defended the July 22 massacre as an act of "self-defense" in his professed civil war, and sat stone-faced as prosecutors described how he killed each of his victims.

But he was gripped by emotion when they showed a video warning of a Muslim takeover of Europe and laden with crusader imagery that he posted on YouTube before the attacks. Suddenly, the self-styled "resistance" fighter's eyes welled up. He cringed his face and wiped away tears with trembling hands.

"Nobody believes that he cried out of pity for the victims," said Mette Yvonne Larsen, a lawyer representing survivors and victims' families in the court proceedings.

Breivik showed no signs of remorse Monday on the first day of a trial that is expected to last 10 weeks. After being uncuffed, he extended his right arm in a clenched-fist salute. He refused to stand when the judges entered the room.

"I don't recognize Norwegian courts because you get your mandate from the Norwegian political parties who support multiculturalism," Breivik said the first time he addressed the court.

The 33-year-old Norwegian also announced he doesn't recognize the authority of Judge Wenche Elisabeth Arntzen because he said she is friends with the sister of former Norwegian Prime Minister and Labor Party leader Gro Harlem Brundtland.

Eight people were killed in Breivik's bombing of Oslo's government district and 69 were slain in his shooting massacre at the left-leaning Labor Party's youth camp on Utoya island outside the capital.

Breivik has said the attacks were necessary to protect Norway from being taken over by Muslims and that he deliberately targeted the governing Labor Party, which he claims has betrayed Norway with liberal immigration policies.

UN's Ban: Syria must allow observers full access

BEIRUT (AP)—U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Monday the Syrian government is responsible for guaranteeing U.N. observers full freedom of movement to monitor the country's tenuous cease-fire, which appeared to be unraveling as regime forces pounded the opposition stronghold of Homs, activists said.

Even though overall violence in Syria has dropped significantly since the truce took effect Thursday, the government's shelling of the central city of Homs over the past four days has raised doubts about President Bashar Assad's commitment to special envoy Kofi Annan's plan to end 13 months of violence and launch talks on the country's political future.

An advance team of six observers arrived in Damascus late Sunday to negotiate the mission's ground rules with Syrian authorities. Ban, speaking to reporters in Brussels, called on Assad to ensure the observers' work is not hindered.

"It is the Syrian government's responsibility to guarantee freedom of access, freedom of movement within the country," he said.

He called the cease-fire "very fragile," but said it was essential that it hold so that an "inclusive political dialogue can continue." He said opposition forces "should also fully cooperate."

The U.N. plans to increase the advance team to 30 people, all of them unarmed, Ban said, adding that the Security Council is expected to authorize a formal monitoring team of about 250 people later this week.

The advance team, led by Moroccan Col. Ahmed Himiche, met Monday with Syrian Foreign Ministry officials to discuss ground rules, according to Annan's spokesman, Ahmad Fawzi.

Assad's regime could try to create obstacles for the U.N. team. The failure of an Arab League observer mission earlier this year was blamed in part on regime restrictions imposed on the monitors, including having to travel with government minders.

Fawzi said in a statement issued in Geneva that the mission "will start with setting up operating headquarters, and reaching out to the Syrian government and the opposition forces so that both sides fully understand the role of the U.N. observers."

"We will start our mission as soon as possible and we hope it will be a success," Himiche told The Associated Press in Damascus.

A spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping department, Kieran Dwyer, said an important priority for the observers in the coming days "will be to get out of Damascus and visit other centers, begin to decide where other operational bases will be established, and make contact with all side in those cities and towns."

He emphasized the need for the observers to be able to move freely and speak to anyone they wish "...without that person suffering negative consequences."

Spaniards livid over king's elephant hunt

MADRID (AP)—In one fell swoop, King Juan Carlos of Spain has managed to unite right and left, young and old, those with jobs and those without in universal outrage over his tone-deaf African hunting safari.

As Spain foundered amid economic woes, what did the 74-year-old monarch do? He slipped away to hunt elephants in southern Africa. Let's count the ways that miscalculation of elephantine proportions has turned into a public relations disaster.

■ A lavish trip amid severe economic pain at home.

Interest rates for Spanish bonds have risen alarmingly in recent days, with fears mounting that the country could be the next in Europe to need a bailout. Not exactly the right time to go on an exotic holiday that one major newspaper estimated could cost twice a Spanish worker's average annual wages.

Spain is also struggling with 23 percent unemployment—the highest in the 17-nation eurozone—which soars to nearly 50 percent for young workers. The trip makes the king's earlier comments about how he can't sleep at night thinking about the country's unemployed ring rather hollow.

"Awful. I think what the king did is awful," said Angelica Diaz, a 70-year-old homemaker pushing a baby stroller in Madrid. "Because of the lack of solidarity with people here who are going hungry. What he did is wrong. He has to show more humanity."

■ A secret trip that even the government did not know about.

This particular trip—it is not clear if taxpayer money was used—only became public when the king stumbled and fell before dawn Friday at his bungalow in Botswana and fractured his right hip, forcing an emergency flight home and hip replacement surgery.

Focus

Aging transit systems grapple with repair backlog

AP

In this photo taken, Wednesday, Aril 11, 2012, Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff, right, and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) General Manager Grace Crunican walk through a work area during a tour of the BART Maintenance Yard in Hayward, Calif.

WASHINGTON (AP)—Driven by high gas prices and an uncertain economy, Americans are turning to trains and buses to get around in greater numbers than ever before. But the aging transit systems they're riding face an $80 billion maintenance backlog that jeopardizes service just when it's most in demand.

The boost in ridership comes as pain at the gas pump and the sluggish economic recovery combine with a migration of young adults to cities and new technology that makes transit faster and friendlier than in the past. The number of transit trips over a 12-month period will likely set a new record later this month or next, say Federal Transit Administration officials. The current peak is 10.3 billion trips over a year, set in December 2008.

But decades of deferred repairs and modernization projects also have many transit agencies scrambling to keep trains and buses in operation. The transit administration estimated in 2010 that it would take $78 billion to get transit systems into shape, and officials say the backlog has grown since then. In some places, workers search the Internet for spare parts that are no longer manufactured. In others, trains operate using equipment designed, literally, in the horse-and-buggy era.

In Philadelphia, for example, commuters ride trains over rusty steel bridges, some of them dating back to the 19th century. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority—which operates subway, trolley, bus and commuter rail systems—is responsible for 346 bridges that are on average 80 years old. Officials said they may be forced to slow trains or even stop them from crossing one bridge that's 1,000 feet long and 90 feet above the ground if it deteriorates further, leaving stations on the other side without service.

A key power substation relies on electrical equipment manufactured in 1926. There's no hope for acquiring spare parts, so workers try to open the boxes housing the equipment as infrequently as possible to prevent damage from exposure to the environment.

"We're operating on a prayer on that line," Joseph Casey, the transportation authority's general manager, said in an interview. "If that fails, half of our commuter rail system would shut down." The system carries 125,000 passengers on weekdays.

The transportation authority doesn't have enough money to replace the bridges or outdated electrical equipment, Casey said. In recent years, the authority has spent $600 million on renovating elevated portions of a subway line that dates back to 1905, and $100 million to install a federally required rail safety system. Another $327 million was spent on new rail cars to replace 72 cars built in 1964. Some of the older cars—nearly 40 of which are still in service—are in such disrepair that passengers get soaked from leaks when it rains.

And yet passengers made 334 million trips on the transit system last year, the most in 22 years, despite a 9 percent fare hike. So far this year, ridership is up 3 percent, Casey said.

San Francisco's subway system, Bay Area Rapid Transit, faces many similar problems. Opened in 1972, BART was at that time the most automated subway system in the nation. But circuit boards and other electronic components for 449 original train cars—out of the system's total of 669 cars—are now 40 years old, no longer manufactured and often impossible to replace.

> *In Philadelphia, commuters ride trains over rusty steel bridges, some of them dating back to the 19th century.*

BART employees regularly scour eBay and other websites in search of after-market dealers who might stock the parts, said Tamar Allen, manager of BART's mechanical operations. When they find a dealer, they buy every useable part until "the well runs dry," she said.

And that's still not enough. Some cars have been cannibalized for parts in order to keep other cars working. Cars whose parts have been removed are still in use, but only when they can be sandwiched between other cars, Allen said. In some cases, employees have re-engineered parts when no replacements could be found, but it's a difficult process because there is no margin for error, she said.

BART plans to buy 775 new cars by 2023 at an estimated cost of $3.2 billion, but so far the agency has identified only about a third of the money—enough for the first phase of 200 cars, James Allison, a BART spokesman, said. Where will the rest come from? "We're working on that," he said.

Despite these problems, passengers are averaging 365,000 weekday trips this year, a record high, Allison said.

Peter Rogoff, administrator of the Federal Transit Administration, who toured a BART repair facility last week, said reducing the backlog of transit repair and replacement projects has been his agency's top priority for the past three years. The transit administration has awarded $1.53 billion for repair and replacement projects, and another $650 million is expected to be awarded this year. The Obama administration also has directed about $9 billion to transit projects through the economic stimulus act and a transportation grant program, although the grants weren't specifically aimed at the backlog.

"If we want the American public to be able to have a choice to avoid higher gas prices by using transit, then the transit service needs to be reliable and desirable," Rogoff said in an interview.

But because of lower tax revenues over the last several years, many state and local governments have cut back aid to transit systems, and many systems are increasing fares and cutting service because of tighter budgets, including agencies in Boston, Detroit and Pittsburgh.

Budget squeezes led Lorain County, Ohio, near Cleveland, and Clayton County, Ga., near Atlanta, to eliminate bus service all together. Transit supporters are trying to resurrect service in both communities.

"Even though we've increased federal investment in this area, the crunch on state and local municipal dollars, as well as the falloff of tax dollars during the recession, has really impacted their ability to bite off the bigger challenges," Rogoff said.

The Roaring Fork Transportation Authority in Colorado, one of the nation's largest rural bus services, is in the process of upgrading to a "bus rapid transit system" that will use intelligent technology to shorten commute times, allow passengers to get real-time information on the status of buses using their smartphones, and provide amenities like WiFi, said Dan Blakenship, the authority's chief executive officer.

The authority provides bus service to mountain towns and ski resorts in the Roaring Fork Valley, including Aspen and Glenwood Springs. Yet the agency has been unable to afford to build garages for most of its buses. With temperatures often dropping into the teens at night, workers have to start up buses at 2 a.m. each morning in order to warm them up before the first get out on the road two hours later. It wastes fuel, cost money and is hard on bus engines, Blakenship said.

And the escalating price of fuel makes matters worse, he said. "Every time we get some wind in our sails, we get hit with one of these diesel fuel price spikes. It's not easy to compensate for that."

Campus Life

Hopwood finishes content area literacy training

This school year, the staff and management of the Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Junior High School focuses its attention to improve one of the PSS Strategic Priorities, which is Parental Engagement & Community Involvement.

The school has gone full force the past months by getting the parents involved in literacy training on the content areas that is also a requirement of all schools. The school has been engaging its parents in several Content Area Literacy Training using the TASEG federal fund.

Making this literacy training available for all interested parents is vital and important. The strategies and skills that they will take away from the training will only help them be more helpful to their children's academic studies. Many of them has been out of school for years and participating in this activity shows just how committed and dedicated they are to ensuring that they learn new skills on how to be of help to their children.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Parent participants in Content Area Literacy Training at Admiral Herbert G. Hopwood Junior High School have their picture taken after taking part in the latest phase of their training.

Each year, each Content Department at the school level are required to put together important information and teaching strategies to share with parents during a four-hour training. So far, the school has been very happy with the turnout and we look forward to having more parent participants next school year.

The activities that parents were able to take away is similar to the lessons that their children are learning in the classroom. What is more interesting is when parents bring their children along to engage in this very information training. Parents are very happy and liked the activities and they appreciate the fact that the school involves parents in the learning process so they too can help their children how to do well in their academic studies.

The school has completed its Language Arts, Science, Physical Education, Health, Leadership Corps Training, and Special Education training, and ends it with Social Studies and Chamorro Carolinian Language Heritage Studies. Many thanks go out to the school administration, especially principal Jonas Barcinas, vice principal for curriculum Epi Cabrera, vice principal Pialur John, Ruby Hocog and all the teachers and staff that helped make the trainings a memorable and productive one for parents. ***(PR)***

Last call for S.T.E.M. grant applications

»Deadline to submit is April 18

TAMUNING, Guam—Applications for the Armed Forces Communication and Electronics Association Marianas Chapter 2012 S.T.E.M. grants are being accepted through April 18, 2012. Grants are awarded to schools with programs, curriculum or initiatives that specifically support the furtherance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education for its students.

Schools throughout Guam and CNMI were provided application information through school administrators. To be considered for the 2012 cycle, submit all applications by April 18 to education@afeca-marianas.org. The selection committee will announce the winners at the Marianas TechNet 2012 Island Fiesta on April 26, 2012, at Two Lovers Point overlooking Tumon Bay in Guam.

Each year, the AFCEA Marianas Chapter awards $1,000 grants to eligible K-12 schools through its S.T.E.M. Teacher Grant program. The chapter canvasses educators across the Marianas Islands soliciting teacher submissions and selects those whose programs can benefit from the grants. The chapter has awarded $12,000 to schools in the region since 2010. Corporate sponsorship of the grant program is always welcomed and has allowed us to provide even more assistance in the past.

Marianas TechNet 2012, *"New Focus on the Western Pacific: Convergence of Strategy and Technology for the 21st Century,"* is the fourth consecutive Technology Conference and Expo, organized by AFCEA Marianas. Proceeds from TechNet events support the chapter's S.T.E.M. grant program.

More information about Marianas TechNet 2012, conference agenda and panel topics are available for viewing at www.marianas-technet.org. Conference fee is $35. Preregistration can also be done at the event website.

College of Micronesia to host first GEAR UP Science Fair, Expo 2012

KOLONIA, Pohnpei—The GEAR UP-Pohnpei program (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) housed at College of Micronesia-FSM Pohnpei campus will hold its 1st annual Science Fair and Expo 2012 at the Pohnpei Campus gymnasium on May 19, 2012, from 2pm to 4pm.

The Science Fair and Expo 2012 is funded from the Direct Aid Program of the Australian Embassy in Pohnpei and allows over 360 8th graders from Saladak, Sekere, Awak, Nett, Kolonia, and Ohmine schools to participate in the science research project. Currently, students are doing literature and internet research during GEAR UP computer classes on Pohnpei campus on Saturdays and during its after-school program Mondays through Fridays. The Australian funded "Middle School Science Program and Expo" will allow the students "hands-on" research and to feel like "real scientists", as they will be able to test their theoretical hypothesis. Student groups will compete against their classmates at the school science fair. They will present their projects and answer a variety of questions posed by two judges; their teacher and an outside volunteer judge. The top performing groups from each classroom will advance to the Expo. It is estimated that 100 students with the best research projects will compete in a science fair expo on May 19, 2012. At the expo event, judges will go from group to group posing questions and listening to remarks. Students will be judged according to their ability to effectively communicate and present their science projects. Once completed, the team of judges will determine the top three science projects. Students will receive a variety of awards and prizes.

GEAR UP program is funded by the US Department of Education and aims at preparing students to enter and succeed in the post-secondary education. If you would like to know more about GEAR UP program, please visit us at Pohnpei Campus or call at 320-3795. ***(College of Micronesia)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CELEBRITY READER

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz reads to the first grade class of Mariana Omengkar at the Tinian Elementary School as part of the school's Celebrity Reading activity.

Roland siblings complete 6-month APAFS internship

Genevieve

Roland

HAGATNA, Guam— Genevieve S. Roland, has successfully completed an administration and marketing internship with Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Services. The internship was for the a six-month period covering the second and third quarters of the 2012 academic year of St. John's School, where she is enrolled in the tenth grade.

She gained the respect of top marketing and finance professionals that worked with her. In illustration of the high regard she was held, it was the first time that APAFS entrusted an intern to act as support for the association's annual investment conference that regularly draws over 300 delegates from around the Pacific region. Her responsibilities included support for marketing and advertising efforts, public relations, and venue coordination.

Her younger brother, Justin A. Roland, also successfully completed an internship with Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Services. The internship was for the same six-month period covering the second and third quarters of the 2012 academic year of St. John's School, where he is enrolled in the ninth grade.

His main responsibilities included converting physical archives of the association to electronic format, updating member and sponsor information, as well as implementing a new web-based member client contact program. ***(APAFS)***

Life & Style

AP wins Pulitzer prize for stories on NYPD spying

By DEEPTI HAJELA
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—The Associated Press won a Pulitzer Prize for investigative journalism Monday for revealing the New York Police Department's widespread spying on Muslims, while The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pa., and a 24-year-old reporter captured the award for local reporting for breaking the Penn State scandal that ultimately brought down Joe Paterno.

In a reflection of the forces reshaping the media world, the turmoil-ridden Philadelphia Inquirer won in the public service category for exposing pervasive violence in the city's schools, while David Wood earned a Pulitzer in national reporting for a relative newcomer, The Huffington Post, for stories about the suffering endured by American troops severely wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

It was only the second Pulitzer ever awarded for reporting that appeared online only.

AP

Associated Press Executive Editor Kathleen Carroll, left, applauds as Associated Press reporter Adam Goldman, center, is hugged after winning the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting with three colleagues, Monday, April 16, 2012 in New York.

Another Pulitzer for investigative reporting was awarded to The Seattle Times for a series about accidental methadone overdoses among patients with chronic pain.

The New York Times won two prizes. David Kocieniewski was honored in the explanatory reporting category for a series on how wealthy people and corporations use loopholes to avoid taxes. And Jeffrey Gettleman received the award for international reporting for his coverage of famine and conflict in East Africa.

Sig Gissler, administrator of the prizes, said the winners in this year's 96th annual competition show that journalism is still a "vibrant force" as a watchdog for the public.

The AP's series of stories—available online at http://apne.ws/IrNyPk—showed how New York police, with the help of a CIA official, created an aggressive surveillance program to gather intelligence on Muslim neighborhoods, businesses and houses of worship. It was the 50th Pulitzer won by the news organization.

The articles showed that police systematically listened in on sermons, hung out at cafes and other public places, infiltrated colleges and photographed people as part of a broad effort to prevent terrorist attacks. Individuals and groups were monitored even when there was no evidence they were linked to terrorism.

The series, which began in August, was by Matt Apuzzo, Adam Goldman, Eileen Sullivan and Chris Hawley. The stories prompted protests, a demand from 34 members of Congress for a federal investigation, and an internal inquiry by the CIA's inspector general. Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly

See AP on Next Page

Behind the Pulitzers: How did they do that?

NEW YORK (AP)—Sometimes the story behind the prize is almost as compelling as the award-winning news itself. Some details on a few of this year's Pulitzer Prize winners.

THE CUB REPORTER

Sara Ganim is a winner of the Pulitzer Prize for local reporting. She's just 24 years old.

She was not long out of college when, as a crime reporter for the Centre Daily Times in State College, Pa., she began digging into rumors of child sex abuse by Jerry Sandusky, a well-known former Penn State University assistant football coach. She kept at it when she left that paper to join The Patriot-News of Harrisburg in January 2011.

There, besides her coverage of crime and other events, she chipped away at the Sandusky story, lining up critical details and key sourcing that let her publish the first story in March 2011 that Sandusky was being investigated by a grand jury.

As the story grew in importance and size, she said, two moments stuck out for her.

The first came as she learned about allegations that Sandusky had raped a boy in a team shower. The second was in the wake of the grand jury's report, when longtime Penn State coach Joe Paterno was fired.

She and the paper's editors hadn't anticipated such fallout.

"We really were so focused on following the facts, and not thinking about what the consequences might be, which I think is actually a good thing because we weren't distracted and we were able to see the whole picture," she said.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS?

Its best-known staffer is a sex columnist with a new show on MTV. It's famous for irreverent, often caustic coverage of Seattle's entertainment and political scene. Now the alternative weekly The Stranger has another distinction—a Pulitzer Prize.

Eli Sanders of The Stranger received one of journalism's highest honors Monday, winning the feature writing award for his harrowing account of a woman who survived a brutal rape. Her partner was killed, and the surviving woman testified about her ordeal in court.

"I was stunned at first," Sanders said.

The Stranger jokingly bills itself as "Seattle's only newspaper," and staffers, led by sex

See BEHIND on Next Page

In Celebration of His New Life

EFRAIN CEPEDA TUDELA

"Efrain Robit"

Born on July 18, 1944, passed away in the grace of our Lord on April 9, 2012 at the age of 67.

In his new Life he now joins his:
Wife: Rita Sakisat Aldan Tudela
Father: Roberto Mendiola Tudela
Mother: Vicenta Ilano Cepeda Tudela

Brothers & Spouse: Florencio C. Tudela & Emerita K. Tudela; Daniel C. Tudela; Herman C. Tudela
Sister: Maria C. Tudela
Parents-in-Law: Heronimo Pangelinan & Candelaria Ogo Naputi Manibusan

He will be remembered by his:

†**Rita Sakisat Aldan Tudela: Children & Spouses**: Joseph A. & Doreen M. Tudela (Joseph Lance/Frannie, Desiree Briana/David (David Joseph); Margarita T. & Gerard B. Salas (Hiroki Gerard, Hiroyuki Gerardo, Hiroaki Gerad); and Lucrecia A. Tudela & Christino DLC. Cabrera (Ritaciah Chayanne, Champ Sage, Ky Christian, Tyce Efrain)

Wife: Antonia Naputi Manibusan Tudela

Children & Spouses: Magdalena T. & Francisco B. Camacho (Antoinette/Salvelo (Ruleiyna, Rianna, Palani), Francisco Jr.); Evelyn M. Takai/Ramon S. Salas (Caroline/Monte, Stephanie/Anthony (Tiffany), Nikita); Joseph M. & Vivian C. Takai (Michelle, Jovi, Britney); Michael M. & Maria M. Takai (Breyandel, Deltona); Patrick M. Takai/Bobbie R. Concepcion (Brittany, Christopher, Paethon, Patrick Jr.); Gloria T. & Michael K. Techur (Ashley, Kortney, Myles); Frankie M. Eliptico; Camron M. Tudela

Brothers/Spouses: †Florencio C. & †Emerita K. Tudela (†Florencio Jr., Thomas/Etsuko, Florentina/Peter, Joey/Esper, Henry/June, Norma/Otto, Cynthia, Elaine/Anthony, Erlynn/Alex, Carl, Loraine/Melvin, Vince); Jesus C. & Inocencia T. Tudela (Jesus Jr./Marianne, Vicente, Primitiva/John, Ramon/Juanette, Marcella/Lino, Delcina/Gil, Victoria/Joseph, Peter/Senia); Luis C. & Mary Jane Tudela; Juan C. & Margarita D. Tudela (Michelle, John Jr./Jerma, Melcom/Vanessa, Adrian/Kimberly); †Herman C. & Magdalena (Tani) H. Tudela (Frank, Melvin/Claudia, Eric/Lillian, Herman/Virgie, Owen/Lei, Caria/Arnold, Herlena/Joshua); Alejandro C. Tudela (Alexander Abel, Maricelle, Amanda)

Sisters/Spouses: Trinidad T. & Carlos L. Takai (Agavita/Joseph, Diana/James, Barbara Ann/Beniel, Joseph/Cynthia, Edwin/Kimberly, Martin/Jacqueline, Melinda, Alvin/Ann, Diego); Maria Magdalena T. & Jose C. Sablan Jr. (Joseph Robert, Elvy Mae)

†**Efrain** *is additionally survived by numerous great-grandchildren, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.*

Nightly mass and rosary is being said at 6:00 pm at San Vicente Catholic Church in San Vicente Village.

On Thursday, April 19, 2012, at 7:30 am his remains will be escorted from Cabrera Funeral Home to Mt. Carmel Cathedral. Responso, Rosary, and Viewing will follow. Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at 10:00 am. Interment will follow at the Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

Thank You, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, and Ghilisou.

The Family

The late Manning Marable wins history Pulitzer

NEW YORK (AP)—The late Manning Marable won the Pulitzer Prize for history Monday, honored for a Malcolm X book he worked on for decades but did not live to see published. For the first time in 35 years, no fiction prize was given.

Pulitzer judges almost awarded two posthumous prizes. David Foster Wallace's "The Pale King," a novel assembled from notes he left behind at the time of his suicide in 2008, was among the finalists for fiction. Also cited were Karen Russell's "Swamplandia" and Denis Johnson's novella "Train Dreams."

"It's wonderful that the Pulitzer nominating committee recommended `The Pale King' to the judges," the book's editor, Michael Pietsch of Little, Brown and Company, wrote in an email. "Anything that brings readers to David's brilliant novels, especially his great novel 'Infinite Jest,' is a good thing!"

"The main reason (for the fiction decision) is that no one of the three entries received a majority, and thus after lengthy consideration, no prize was awarded," said Sig Gissler, administrator of the Pulitzer Prizes. "There were multiple factors involved in these decisions, and we don't discuss in detail why a prize is given or not given."

AP

In this undated image released by Columbia University, playwright Quiara Alegria Hudes is shown. Hudes was awarded the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, announced in New York, Monday, April 16, 2012.

News about the fiction category was greeted with surprise.

"No fiction prize!" Jane Smiley, a Pulitzer winner in 1992 for "A Thousand Acres," wrote on her Facebook page. "Not even to (Geraldine Brooks') `Caleb's Crossing!' I did love that one."

In an email to The Associated Press, Smiley added: "I can't believe there wasn't a worthy one. It's a shame. But sometimes a selection committee really cannot agree, and giving no award is the outcome. Too bad."

"It's the most significant award in American letters and it's a shame the jury couldn't find a work of fiction this year," said Paul Bogaards, director of publicity at Alfred A. Knopf, which published "Swamplandia" and numerous past winners, including Smiley's novel. "The Pulitzer makes sales. It's a prize that can change the career trajectory of a writer."

Susan Larson, chairwoman of the Pulitzer fiction jury, stressed that it wasn't up to the jury to select the winner. Rather, she said, its job was to submit three finalists to the board. "The decision not to award the prize this year rests solely with the Pulitzer board," she wrote in an email to the AP.

Fiction judges have withheld the Pulitzer 10 times before, according to Gissler, most recently in 1977. Among eligible books that have been bypassed: Thomas Pynchon's "Gravity's Rainbow," James Dickey's "Deliverance" and Kurt Vonnegut's "Cat's Cradle."

Quiara Alegria Hudes's play "Water by the Spoonful," about an Iraq war veteran struggling to find his place in the world, has won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for drama, leaving its author in a "daze."

The drama, which was produced last fall at Hartford Stage Company in Connecticut, was called an "imaginative play about the search for meaning" by the Columbia University's prize board on Monday.

"I'm still kind of in a daze about it but I'm very excited," she said by phone from Middletown, Conn., where she is teaching a play writing workshop to undergraduates at Wesleyan University. "I'm really delighted that something that was a little off the beaten path was considered."

Marable, a longtime professor at Columbia University, died last year at age 60 just as "Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention" was being released. Years in the making, the book was widely praised, although some of Malcolm X's children objected to the troubled portrait Marable offered of the activist's marriage to Betty Shabazz.

"It is so rewarding to see Manning's work honored as a landmark achievement in the documentation of 20th century American history," Wendy Wolf, associate publisher at Viking, said in a statement.

Another long-term project, John Lewis Gaddis' "George F. Kennan: An American Life," won the Pulitzer for biography. Gaddis is a Yale University professor and leading Cold War scholar who began work on the Kennan book in the early 1980s. The project was delayed by Kennan's longevity. Kennan, a founding Cold War strategist and a Pulitzer winner, was in his 70s at the time he authorized the book. He asked only that Gaddis wait until after his death.

AP

From Page 19

and Mayor Michael Bloomberg have defended the program as a thoroughly legal tool for keeping the city safe.

The four reporters were toasted by scores of colleagues gathered in the newsroom of AP world headquarters in New York.

"We kept reporting things that no one in the city of New York knew about," said AP's executive editor, Kathleen Carroll. "That's what I'm most proud of."

The AP reporters praised their editors for sticking by them and pushing to extend the investigation, even in the face of some high-level criticism in New York City.

"We came under relentless attack," Goldman said. "Some people thought they could intimidate us and the AP—and they were wrong."

A year after the Pulitzer judges found no entry worthy of the prize for breaking news, The Tuscaloosa News of Alabama won the award for coverage of a deadly tornado. By blending traditional reporting with the use of social media, the newspaper provided real-time updates and helped locate missing people, while producing in-depth print coverage despite a power outage that forced the paper to publish at a plant 50 miles away.

The twister hit just after the news staff had had a session on how to use social media to cover the news, city editor Katherine Lee recalled.

"I think we won because the tornado hit where we live, and we all felt a responsibility to do this well, to tell our story well—about how people came together to help total strangers," Lee said.

The judges declined to award a prize for editorial writing.

At The Patriot-News, Sara Ganim, a police and courts reporter, won for "courageously revealing and adeptly covering the explosive Penn State sex scandal," the Pulitzer judges wrote. At 24, she is one of the youngest journalists ever to win a Pulitzer; at least one prior winner, Jackie Crosby of the Macon Telegraph and News of Georgia, was 23.

Ganim broke the news of the grand jury investigation into allegations against former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky. She was also the first to report his indictment on charges of molesting several boys involved in a charity he ran. Sandusky has denied the allegations.

The scandal ended Paterno's lustrous coaching career, prompted the ouster of Penn State President Graham Spanier and led to a nationwide discussion over the place of big-time sports on college campuses.

"Better than any award, the most rewarding thing through this whole process has been people telling me that this story and our coverage has changed their minds about local reporting, and we all know that there are a lot of minds yet to change," Ganim said.

The Philadelphia Inquirer—which has recently gone through bankruptcy and repeated rounds of cutbacks and has changed hands five times in the past six years—showed how school violence went underreported. In response, the school system established a new way of keeping track of serious incidents.

One of the winning reporters, John Sullivan, who has since left the paper for Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, was back Monday to celebrate with colleagues.

"This just gives us so much joy ... because we've seen what you guys have gone through the past 10 years, all that we've endured and seeing our friends walk out of the building," he told the newsroom, yet "everybody here just continues to do great journalism."

Michael J. Berens and Ken Armstrong of The Seattle Times looked at the consequences when patients with state-subsidized health care were moved from safer pain-control drugs to methadone, which is cheaper but carries more risks. "Not only is this wrong, but this is incredibly tragic," Berens said.

At The Huffington Post, Wood, a veteran military correspondent, looked at catastrophically wounded soldiers' physical and emotional struggles, as well as how their families, communities, comrades and doctors responded.

The Stranger, a Seattle alternative weekly, won the feature writing award for a story about a woman who survived an attack that killed her partner.

Some newspapers that have traditionally been Pulitzer powerhouses, including The Washington Post and The Los Angeles Times, came up empty-handed this year.

Tim McGuire, a professor at Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, said the variety among this year's winners is noteworthy: "The entire news ecosystem is being fragmented, and great journalism is being done by all parts of that ecosystem."

Mary Schmich, a longtime Chicago Tribune columnist, was recognized with the commentary award for pieces that "reflect the character and capture the culture of her famed city," the judges said. Film critic Wesley Morris of The Boston Globe won the criticism award, for work the judges called "distinguished by pinpoint prose and an easy traverse between the art house and the big-screen box office."

In photography, Massoud Hossaini of Agence France-Presse won the breaking news award for his picture of a girl weeping after a suicide bomber attacked a crowded shrine in Afghanistan.

Craig F. Walker of The Denver Post won the feature photography award—his second—for his work on an Iraq war veteran's struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Politico's Matt Wuerker won the editorial cartooning prize for work that poked fun at partisan fighting in Washington.

The Pulitzer Prizes are given out annually by Columbia University on the recommendation of a board of journalists and others. Each award carries a $10,000 prize except for the public service award, which is a gold medal.

BEHIND

From Page 19

columnist Dan Savage, go out of their way to poke fun at just about everything. But Sanders said it was "cool that a scrappy little alt-weekly in Seattle can produce something that resonates on this level."

Sanders won for coverage of the murder trial of a man accused of raping and stabbing a lesbian couple in their Seattle home in 2009, killing one of them.

"It's a great, great privilege to work at a paper that will allow someone to hang on to a crime story for so long," Sanders said. "(It) was a credit to how much time The Stranger was willing to give."

WHAT TIMING!

For reporters at The Philadelphia Inquirer, which has been racked with uncertainty in recent weeks amid layoffs and new ownership, the timing of its Pulitzer Prize for public service was not bad.

"It couldn't have come at a better time, and I think we're all hoping that it starts a new era for this newspaper and this whole media company," said Rose Ciotta, project editor for the "Assault on Learning" series.

The project showed how school violence went underreported and shed light on the school system's lackluster response to the problem. In response to the newspaper's reporting, the school system established a new way of reporting serious incidents.

In the past few months, more than three dozen staffers at the Inquirer have been laid off, and a group of local businessmen purchased The Philadelphia Inquirer, the Philadelphia Daily News and the website Philly.com from hedge funds for about $55 million—a fraction of what investors paid for them in 2006.

John Sullivan, who was on the project team but has since left the paper for Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, was in the newsroom to celebrate with his former colleagues.

"This just gives us so much joy ... because we've seen what you guys have gone through the past 10 years, all that we've endured and seeing our friends walk out of the building," he told the newsroom, yet "everybody here just continues to do great journalism."

A LITTLE RESPECT

With a Pulitzer Prize in the hands of one of its reporters, the popular yet sometimes-derided Huffington Post is getting some respect.

David Wood's 10-part series on the struggles of wounded American soldiers returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan, "Beyond the Battlefield," won the Pulitzer for national reporting. It's a first for a reporter from the AOL-owned Internet news site.

Arianna Huffington, president and editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post Media Group, said she believes the award changes the perception of the Huffington Post as an aggregator that draws eyeballs by recycling other outlets' journalism.

"It definitely does," Huffington said. "Always in life, the narrative lags behind the reality."

Huffington said Wood's reporting exhibited the site's commitment to original reporting and in-depth storytelling, while noting the site will remain "a platform" for distribution and aggregation.

Online news organizations were made eligible to receive Pulitzers in 2009.

But the Pulitzer breakthrough for the Huffington Post came, ironically or not, from old-fashioned reporting.

"The kind of reporting that I did varies not at all from the kind of reporting that I was doing 10 or 20 or even 30 years ago," said Wood, a veteran correspondent of Time Magazine, the Los Angeles Times and others. "Except I'm better at it now."

BEATING MOTHER NATURE

Social media skills allowed staffers at the Tuscaloosa (Ala.) News to report the first word on a deadly tornado that stopped its presses.

The coverage, which included real-time updates on Twitter, earned the newspaper a Pulitzer Prize for breaking news.

City Editor Katherine Lee recalled that the April 2011 tornado hit just after the staff had a session on how to use social media for news coverage. Staffers hit the streets within moments after the storm passed, sending in updates about the twister, which was blamed for more than 50 deaths.

The newspaper also used its website as a bulletin board where people could post updates about their whereabouts or seek information about others.

The storm knocked out power to the newspaper, forcing it to publish at a plant 50 miles away.

One reporter, Jamon Smith, rushed to his neighborhood to find his apartment gone.

Despite losing everything except his car, cellphone and the clothes he was wearing when the twister hit, Smith worked nonstop through the night and next day. Everybody else kept going too, he said.

"We felt like it was something we had a duty to do, to let the world know what had happened here," said Smith, who now lives in a different part of the city.

Disney making 'Iron Man 3' with Chinese partner

BEIJING (AP)—Walt Disney Co. said Monday it will co-produce its next "Iron Man" movie with a Chinese partner in Hollywood's latest effort to forge closer ties with China's fast-growing film industry.

"Iron Man 3," starring Robert Downey Jr., Gwyneth Paltrow and Don Cheadle, will begin filming this year, Walt Disney and its Chinese partner DMG Entertainment said. They said DMG will jointly produce the movie in China but gave no indication what parts might be filmed in this country.

"We know Chinese audiences love Iron Man. So we are going to add Chinese elements and a Chinese story into Iron Man 3," Disney's general manager for Greater China, Stanley Cheung, said at a news conference.

AP

In this undated file photo released by Paramount Pictures, Robert Downey Jr. is seen as billionaire industrialist Tony Stark aka Iron Man in the film, "Iron Man."

Disney and Beijing-based DMG said the Chinese company will invest in "Iron Man 3" but gave no details.

Foreign film companies are launching ventures with Chinese partners to expand access to China, where box office receipts are growing rapidly at a time of weak sales in the United States and Europe.

China's ticket sales rose by one-third last year to $2 billion while revenue in North America, though still far larger at $10.2 billion, has fallen for two straight years.

The communist government wants Chinese studios to learn from Hollywood and is trying to attract foreign studios to form ventures by promising more market access and a bigger share of ticket sales.

DMG Entertainment is a unit of DMG, an advertising and media company founded in 1993 by three partners, two Chinese and one American.

The company co-produced the science fiction thriller "Looper," due to be released this year, starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Bruce Willis and Emily Blunt. It includes scenes filmed in Shanghai.

For the past decade, China's state-run film distributors have allowed in only 20 foreign films per year for national distribution. The foreign share of ticket sales is limited to a range of 13.5 to 17.5 percent.

Last month, the government announced it will allow in an additional 14 foreign films if they are made in 3-D or for the big-screen Imax format. It raised the foreign share of ticket sales to 25 percent.

The "Iron Man" films, based on a Marvel Comics character, feature Robert Downey Jr. as a billionaire weapons-maker who fights villains wearing high-tech armor. Disney says the first two movies brought in a total of $1.2 billion.

"This cooperation will be very important to both countries, China and the United States," said Dan Mintz, DMG's CEO and a cofounder. "This film will be shot together with Chinese partners."

Disney rival DreamWorks Animation SKG Inc. unveiled a venture last month with three Chinese companies to make animated and live action material. DreamWorks will own 45 percent of the venture.

Last June, Legendary Entertainment, producer of hits including "The Dark Knight," formed Legendary East with Chinese studio Huayi Brothers Media Corp. It plans one to two movies per year for global audiences, mainly in English and based on Chinese themes.

Another studio, Relativity Media, said last year it would make movies with two Chinese partners for global audiences and distribute movies in China.

Baldwin

Alec Baldwin explains tweets about 'leaving' NBC

WASHINGTON (AP)—Alec Baldwin says he's still a fan of NBC despite tweeting angrily last week that he was "leaving NBC just in time" after a "Today" show crew camped outside his apartment building.

In Washington to push for arts funding, the actor said Monday that a big draw of joining the cast of "30 Rock" was working at NBC.

Baldwin says he'll finish a seventh season of "30 Rock" but that it's slated to end next year. He says NBC needs to redo its lineup to get out of ratings trouble.

Baldwin says NBC has the best programming legacy, but he's not a fan of "Today." He says there's always ABC's "Good Morning America" or CNN's Anderson Cooper at night. The "Today" crew stakeout followed the arrest of a woman on charges of stalking Baldwin.

Baldwin says his next project will be a Broadway play.

Ferguson taking 'Late Late Show' home to Scotland

NEW YORK (AP)—Craig Ferguson is going back to Scotland and taking "Late Late Show" viewers along for the trip.

CBS says the Scotland-based episodes will air the week of May 14. While there, Ferguson explores Edinburgh and Glasgow. He also returns to his hometown of Cumbernauld, with stops at his childhood home and high school.

On the trip, taped last month, he's joined by actors Mila Kunis, Michael Clarke Duncan and Rashida Jones, as well as author-humorist David Sedaris.

Music will be performed by local Glasgow rock band The Imagineers.

This marks the second international trip for the show. It also went to Paris last year.

"The Late Show with Craig Ferguson" airs weeknights on CBS at 12:37 a.m. Eastern time.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Brown pleads not guilty to DUI in LA

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Bobby Brown has pleaded not guilty to drunken driving and other charges stemming from his arrest last month in Los Angeles. City News Service says an attorney entered pleas Monday on Brown's behalf to misdemeanor counts of DUI, driving with an illegal blood-alcohol content and driving on a suspended license. He could face up to six months in jail if convicted. Brown didn't attend the Superior Court arraignment in Van Nuys. The 43-year-old singer is the former husband of the late Whitney Houston. He was arrested by the California Highway Patrol on March 26.

Beach Boys performing for SiriusXM before tour

NEW YORK (AP)—Before their reunion tour kicks off, the Beach Boys will perform together in a much more intimate setting for SiriusXM Radio. The band is due to perform a selection of songs Thursday in Los Angeles as part of SiriusXM's "Artist Confidential" private concert series. The group will also be interviewed during the event. The Beach Boys are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year, and kick off their tour in Tucson, Ariz., on April 24. The SiriusXM concert will air May 26.

Ryan O'Neal says he has Stage 2 prostate cancer

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Ryan O'Neal says the prognosis is positive for his recovery from recently diagnosed Stage 2 prostate cancer. The 70-year-old actor said in a statement released through his publicist on Monday that he was "shocked and stunned by the news" but feels fortunate the disease was caught early. He said his doctors expect him to make a full recovery. Higher stage numbers mean more extensive disease, with Stage 4 being the highest, according to the National Cancer Institute. O'Neal said he is grateful for the support of his friends and family. He also advocates regular exams because early detection is the best defense against prostate cancer. The actor's memoir about his romance with Farrah Fawcett, "Both of Us: My Life With Farrah," will be published on May 1.

Daughter probably realizes mom never wanted her around

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My youngest daughter, "Lizzy," the sweetest and most conscientious of my children, has been cut off yet again by her mother, "Ruth." Ruth pressured Lizzy to graduate from high school a year early because she couldn't date with a child still at home. (Her words.) After graduation, Lizzy was shipped off to another state for college, then abandoned to find her own funding for continued education.

Lizzy feels unwanted by her mother and desperately wants to know why. The truth is, Ruth didn't want that pregnancy in the first place and has held it against Lizzy. The deeper truth is I wanted another child and deliberately got Ruth pregnant. I never told anyone, even after Ruth divorced me several years later. As far as I know, she has always accepted it as accidental.

What I did was wrong, yet I can't imagine a world without my daughter in it. Lizzy is the only one of my children who has become close to me since the divorce. The others all believe their mother's lies about me—that I cheated on her, which is the opposite of what really happened.

Should I share the truth about her birth with my daughter? I'm not sure because I have always believed it is a major mistake to admit to a child of any age that their pregnancy was a surprise, let alone that it was unwanted. Two of my siblings weren't planned, and one of them has become a bitter and distant adult. I want to help my daughter understand and accept her mother's insane actions and get on with her own life. What should I do?

GUILT-RIDDEN DAD

DEAR GUILT-RIDDEN: Lizzy already has a pretty good idea that she wasn't wanted, and I wouldn't be surprised if her mother hasn't told her she was a "surprise" baby. Do not try to expiate your feelings of guilt by telling your daughter what you have told me. That is a discussion you should have with your confessor, not your child.

It may take a therapist to help Lizzy forgive her mother and get on with her life. What you should do is pay for at least half of her therapy and contribute toward her education.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son was recently diagnosed with bone cancer and is currently receiving treatment. We heard about a fundraiser for pediatric cancer being held in our community. We joined the event and have received many donations from family and friends.

As much as I want to hand-write thank-you cards, between his treatments, my work schedule and my other kids I can't find the time. Is an email thank you OK? The donations have all been made online.

WANTS TO DO THE RIGHT THING

DEAR WANTS TO DO THE RIGHT THING: I know you are under a lot of pressure right now. However, please refrain from expressing your gratitude by email. Send short, handwritten, personal notes—a few at a time—to those who gave money, as your schedule permits. It is the proper thing to do, and they will be appreciated.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: For decades I have been told I look like my mother. The problem is, my mother is ugly! I no longer respond to the comment, preferring to remain silent and just stare at the person instead.

Abby, please remind people that unless the comparison is to an attractive model, opinions should be kept to oneself.

BEAUTIFUL IN MY OWN WAY, RICHMOND, KY.

DEAR BEAUTIFUL IN YOUR OWN WAY: I'll remind them, but it's possible that you're overly sensitive. The person could be referring to a family resemblance, your coloring or a mannerism. A diplomatic response would be, "Thank you. Isn't she a dear?"

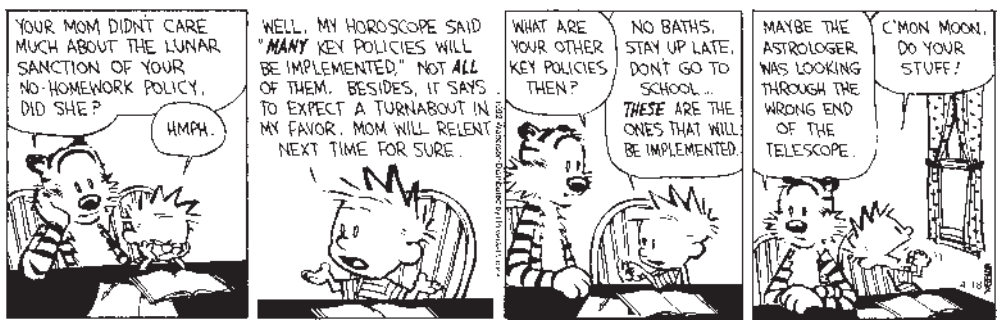
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


YOUR MOM DIDN'T CARE MUCH ABOUT THE LUNAR SANCTION OF YOUR NO-HOMEWORK POLICY, DID SHE?
HMPH.
WELL, MY HOROSCOPE SAID "MANY KEY POLICIES WILL BE IMPLEMENTED," NOT ALL OF THEM. BESIDES, IT SAYS TO EXPECT A TURNABOUT IN MY FAVOR. MOM WILL RELENT NEXT TIME FOR SURE.
WHAT ARE YOUR OTHER KEY POLICIES THEN?
NO BATHS, STAY UP LATE, DON'T GO TO SCHOOL... THESE ARE THE ONES THAT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED.
MAYBE THE ASTROLOGER WAS LOOKING THROUGH THE WRONG END OF THE TELESCOPE.
C'MON MOON, DO YOUR STUFF!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

IT'S EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE QUIZ SHOW, "ASK ODIE"!
READY FOR YOUR FIRST QUESTION, ODIE?
HMMM...
THAT WASN'T IT, DIPWAD!
Distributed by Universal Uclick www.facebook.com/garfield
JIM DAVIS 4/18
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Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHAT IS IT WITH YOU AND THAT BASEBALL VIDEO GAME?
LAURA, I CREATED MYSELF AND I'M PLAYING IN THE BIG LEAGUES.
IT DOES LOOK REAL.
AND THE STANDINGS ARE REAL, TOO...
THE STANDINGS ARE REAL?
YEAH, I'M IN GAME 2 OF A 162-GAME SEASON.
AND THE CUBS HAVE BEEN MATHEMATICALLY ELIMINATED FROM THE PLAYOFFS.
ZING!
© 2012 Universal Uclick
www.adamathome.com

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

...AND THAT'S WHY I THINK WOMEN MAKE BETTER SUPREME COURT JUSTICES.
YOU'RE A GOOD LISTENER. MOST GUYS DON'T LIKE TO HEAR WHAT WOMEN THINK.
SO WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?
FIFTY-SIX BOTTLES OF BEER ON THE WALL...

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

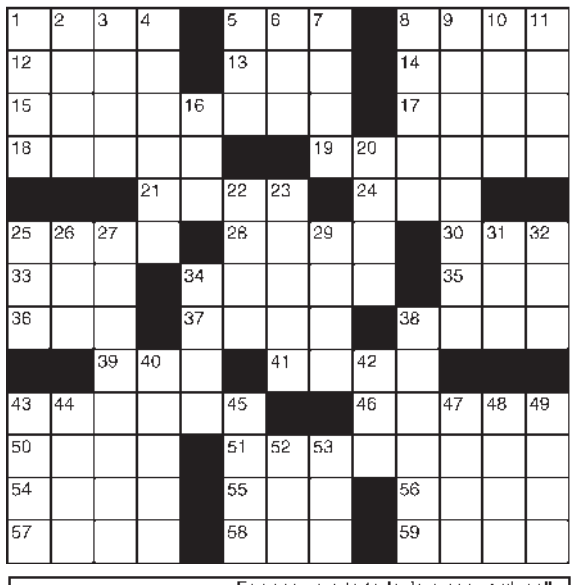
ACROSS
1 Painter Chagall
5 One time around
8 Overconfident
12 Do as you're told
13 Manmouse link
14 Lima's land
15 Tofu
17 Falls behind
18 Divest
19 Compact piano
21 Money
24 Mel of baseball lore
25 Probability
28 Iodine source
30 "Rocks"
33 Finder's charge
34 Cars
35 Cattle call
36 Peninsula st.
37 Author Bellow
38 "Where've you —?"
39 To the — degree
41 Tactic
43 Hunters' lures
46 Bracelet location
50 Money of China
51 1972 Bill Withers hit
54 Ms. Brockovich
55 Prepare to fight
56 Computer brand
57 Finished
58 Energy
59 Sunrise

DOWN
1 Unruly groups
2 Encourage
3 Caboose's position
4 Skeptical folks
5 "Skip to My —"
6 Timetable abbr.
7 Cushions
8 Bowler's problem
9 Interim
10 Incite
11 Sudden wind
16 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)
20 Band in Boston?
22 Gull-like bird
23 Excited
25 Vacationing
26 Tierra — Fuego
27 TV Superman portrayer
29 Hang around
31 Miler Sebastian
32 A billion years
34 Wan
38 Secondary route
40 A million grams
42 Possess
43 Changed color
44 Continental coin
45 Sharp rebuke
47 Erstwhile Peruvian
48 Merganser duck
49 Forktailed flier
52 Before
53 Pump up the volume

Solution time: 21 mins.

H	A	R	T	■	E	S	P	■	E	S	A	U
O	D	O	R	■	D	U	O	■	P	I	G	S
D	O	C	U	M	E	N	I	■	O	N	U	S
■	■	■	I	O	N	■	R	I	N	G	E	R
S	A	L	S	A	■	P	O	N	Y	■	■	■
I	H	I	M	■	H	A	G	M	E	N	I	■
A	I	D	■	A	R	O	S	E	■	D	O	H
B	A	S	E	M	E	N	T	■	M	A	L	I
■	■	■	G	O	N	G	■	D	F	M	O	N
I	N	V	O	K	E	■	S	I	R	■	■	■
V	I	I	I	■	T	E	N	E	M	E	N	T
A	L	P	S	■	I	R	A	■	A	K	I	N
N	E	S	T	■	C	A	P	■	N	E	X	T

Yesterday's answer 4-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Melissa Joan Hart, 36; Maria Bello, 45; Conan O'Brien, 49; Jane Leeves, 51.

Happy Birthday: You'll want to impose change, but before you do something rash, think about the consequences. Change can be a good thing, but only if it is well thought-out. A practical approach to a lifestyle change that can bring you closer to your goals is the path to follow. Your numbers are 1, 9, 12, 25, 27, 34, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): By acting on impulse, you will surprise someone who will divulge information you require. It's your spontaneity that will keep everyone wondering what you'll do next. Variety and diversification are your tickets to success. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Deal with any legal, financial or health matters quickly. You may have to use a little force if you want to get things done on time and to your specifications. Don't give in to an emotional ploy that will end up costing you financially. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Be realistic regarding the promises you make. If you are too generous with your time, money or the services you offer, someone will take advantage of you. Problems or opposition will arise if you are too open about your plans. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Hide your emotions from anyone who can influence your position or reputation. Don't deviate from the way you are asked to do things. You will face a no-win situation that must be handled with caution. Compromise will pay off. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Participate in events and you will be recognized for your skill, talent and ability to take charge. Love is in the stars, and you can enrich your current relationship with a little romance, or find someone special if you are single. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Take care of money, health or legal matters that can influence your home, family and personal security. Take an interest in political reforms that can affect your lifestyle and environment. Speaking up for your rights will enhance your reputation. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Make the first move if it will help you get a deal off the ground or initiate a friendship with someone you want to get to know better or work with. Don't allow a controlling person to hold you back. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Take on a challenge and it will motivate you to get involved in larger projects that can lead to monetary and personal gains. Look into making physical or financial alterations that will bring you greater confidence or stability. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): A residential move or change will work to your advantage. Changing your surroundings, the way you live or who you live with will not please everyone, but it will make you happy. Follow your heart and live your life your way. ✪✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Assess and consider your options before you lay your cards on the table. You are likely to upset someone if you make changes without getting approval first. Focus on self-improvement and keeping the peace for the time being. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You've got what it takes to persuade others to follow your lead. Home improvement projects will pay off, and love relationships will be enhanced by the changes you make. A skill or service you can offer will bring cash returns. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't be disillusioned by what others say or do. Stick to the truth and keep your thoughts out in the open. Honesty will be the only route to take if you don't want to suffer a loss. Don't give in to emotional manipulation. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are a doer. You see what you want and go after it.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		4	9	3	6	1		
	7						9	
9				4				6
7				9				5
3	8			1	7	9		4
6								2
8								1
	2			5			8	
		7	8	6	4	3		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 4/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	2	5	9	4	7	3	6	1
9	3	7	6	5	1	8	2	4
4	6	1	2	3	8	5	9	7
3	5	6	7	1	4	2	8	9
7	8	2	3	6	9	4	1	5
1	9	4	5	8	2	6	7	3
5	1	9	8	2	3	7	4	6
6	4	8	1	7	5	9	3	2
2	7	3	4	9	6	1	5	8

Difficulty level ★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID QUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DRAMA AT THE DAYTONA 500 Solution: 9 letters

D	D	H	A	F	I	E	L	D	P	G	E	T	N	Y
R	A	A	T	N	I	O	A	E	R	L	R	O	T	K
I	Y	L	U	E	N	R	N	E	O	A	O	E	C	C
V	T	F	E	D	S	U	E	P	T	N	F	A	L	U
E	O	W	L	E	I	N	A	S	C	A	R	D	E	R
R	N	A	F	F	A	E	E	L	S	T	A	I	A	T
S	A	Y	F	I	L	R	N	K	L	S	D	R	N	H
E	T	G	I	N	N	A	N	C	T	Y	I	O	U	I
C	N	E	B	S	T	I	M	H	E	T	O	L	P	R
O	E	T	G	P	N	N	S	E	A	Ⓦ	A	F	I	D
N	D	A	E	E	E	O	F	H	Ⓞ	R	C	M	T	E
D	I	R	R	C	V	U	S	Ⓗ	S	A	D	T	T	L
P	C	T	G	T	E	T	Ⓢ	P	R	I	N	T	E	A
O	C	S	F	L	A	G	A	S	E	S	N	E	D	Y
Y	A	D	N	O	M	L	P	A	T	R	I	C	K	D

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Accident, Annually, Audience, Cars, Cleanup, Dale Earnhardt, Daytona, Delay, Drivers, Event, Field, Finish, Fire, Flag, Flame, Florida, Fuel, Gases, Green, Greg Biffle, Halfway, Inspect, Lane, Laps, Matt Kenseth, Monday, NASCAR, Noon, Pass, Patrick, Pitted, Pole, Radio, Rainout, Safety, Second, Show, Speed, Sprint, Start, Strategy, Third, Track, Truck

Yesterday's Answer: Seize the Day

The NEW Treasury 12-cd set sold by celebrity cruise director Julie McCullough is $39.99 plus $3.99 postage and handling (614-96 total). To order only: The Puzzle Treasury, P.O. Box 1000, Kenilworth, NJ 07033. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery. Offer valid in U.S. only. Void where prohibited. Limit one set per household. Additional terms may apply. Offer expires 12/31/12. Call toll-free 1-800-548-4150. Collection includes 1,000 puzzles on 12 CDs. Contains 175 challenge 2D and 3D puzzles.

CLASSIFIED ADS

EMPLOYMENT

1-Fisherman (Bottom / Trolling / Diving) W/ 6 mos. experience required. Minimum Salary. Send resume to SMJ Corporation, P.O. Box 503944 Saipan MP 96950.

WANTED TO BUY

Need cash fast??? We want to buy your OnePass miles or Skymiles!!! Call 888-2205.

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

2 Bedroom apartment, Located in CK, along Texas Road. Fully furnished. $275.00 per month. Trash and Sewer included. Call 233-1190 or 287-8218

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call 235-6527/8 or 285-1317 for info.

Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Sunset View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

WHATZIT Solution:
Account overdrawn

FOR LEASE
Land: 1,192 sq.m.
Building: 5,170 sq. ft. (semi-concrete)
GREAT DEAL!!
Location: corner lot across basketball court, Koblerville
Please contact Mr. Daniel @ 322-0852

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms,
Chalan Kiya
P.O. Box 503758
Saipan, MP 96950

Tel: (670) 234-7859
Fax: (670) 234-5749

Attorney for Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

MARIANAS PUBLIC LAND TRUST, Plaintiff,	**] Civil Action No. 06-0324**
vs.	
FRANCISCO A. AGUON and ROSALIA M. AGUON, Defendants.	

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR MOTION TO CONFIRM SALE OF MORTGAGED PROPERTY

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the attached Motion to Confirm Sale of Mortgaged Property by Plaintiff has been filed with the Court and said Motion is set for a hearing on this 31st day of May, 2012, at 1:30 pm before Judge JN Camacho in the Superior Court, Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Dated this 27th day of March, 2012.

/s/ CLERK OF COURT

SUCCESS INTERNATIONAL CORP.
DBA: SUCCESS AUTO REPAIR SHOP
JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(1) AUTO AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT ELECTRICIAN

QUALIFICATIONS:

MORE THAN 5 YEARS EXPERIENCE
H.S. VOCATIONAL OR COLLEGE LEVEL

RATE: $5.05 - $5.50 PER HOUR

Knowledgeable in mechanical problem.
in charge of repairing, troubleshooting and upgrading the vehicle's electrical system as well as the devices that relies on electrical energy.

KNOW HOWTO DIAGNOSE ELECTRICAL WIRING/CABLE PROBLEM OF VEHICLE

KNOW HOW TO REPAIR OR HANDLE EVERYTHING SUCH AS VEHICLE IGINTION, ALARM, COOLING AND HEATING YSTEM, POWER WINDOW AND LOCK, NAVIGATION SYSTEM.

APPLY OR SEND RESUME TO SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL CORP
PMB 778 BOX 10003 SAIPAN MP 96950
LOWER BASE OR CALL 322-1558/1988

FOR SALE

Aluminum Container (will not rust) Converted to Guest House/Studio

Furnished with split type aircon, built-in shower, vanity with large mirror and separate toilet. Also has sliding patio door with vertical blinds. All in good condition.

Serious inquiries only. Contact Mila at 234-2440

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Kenneth Mitsutsune is no longer affiliated or associated in any manner with Magical Bower, LLC dba Chalan Kanoa Beach Hotel effective September 01, 2011. Any transaction, contracts or agreements for any services accepted or made by him on behalf of the company after the date mentioned above are considered null and void.

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) to limit hiring to qualified US workers, as restricted by CNMI law, and that equal opportunity be given to all qualified US worker applicants regardless of age, sex or sexual orientation, religion, marital status, political status, veterans status, disability or place of origin.

Opening Date: 04/11/12 **Closing Date:** Continuous*

JVA#11-005:	Accountant Chief
Pay Level / Step:	Ungraded
Annual Salary:	$40,000.00 - $50,000.00**
Location:	Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan
JVA#12-003:	Marketing Trainee
Pay Level / Step:	12/02-12/08
Annual Salary:	$10,598.03 - $14,193.06**
Location:	Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan
JVA#12-004:	Community Project Assistant (Part-Time)
Pay Level / Step:	17/01-17/08
Annual Salary:	$12,431.54 - $17,482.77**
Location:	Marianas Visitors Authority, Saipan
JVA#12-005:	Trades Technician II
Pay Level / Step:	22/01-22/10
Annual Salary:	$15,860.10 - $24,584.23**
Location:	Marianas Visitors Authority, Rota

*If not filled, the vacancy announcement will be continued and applications will be reviewed every two weeks thereafter until the search is closed. Deadlines that fall on a non-business day will be extended to the next business day.
** The salary given will be determined by the qualifications of the appointee.

Interested persons may contact the Marianas Visitors Authority Office at (670) 664-3200/01 for more detailed information on position description. A completed application must be submitted together with the required documents for consideration until search is closed. A resume may be attached, but the application form must be filled out in full. MVA is an equal opportunity employer.

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 6-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $27 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$27
• 5-Liner	$24	$39
• 3-Liner with picture	$24	$42
• 5-Liner with picture	$36	$57

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

WHATZIT?™

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

DRACULA SKETCHED

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www.facebook.com/dingbatsgames

Find today's solution in classified section

Jazz outlast Nowitzki, Mavericks in 3OT

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Al Jefferson scored 28 points and equaled a career-high with 26 rebounds as the Utah Jazz defeated Dallas 123-121 Monday in triple-overtime to halt a seven-game losing streak against the Mavericks and preserve their slim playoff hopes.

Utah began the day 10th in the Western Conference but pulled one-half game behind Phoenix and Houston for the eighth and final spot with four games remaining.

The loss dropped Dallas to seventh in the West, one-half game behind Denver.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 40 points against Utah for the second straight time. His 3-pointer forced the second overtime, but he couldn't convert late in the third extra period.

Heat 101, Nets 98

In Newark, New Jersey, LeBron James scored Miami's final 17 points in a furious one-man rally, finishing with 37 to lead the Heat past the Nets.

In a game the Heat never led until the final 51 seconds, James willed them to their 10th straight victory over New Jersey. With Dwyane Wade resting, James scored those 17 points over the last 4:48.

Chris Bosh had 22 points and 15 rebounds for the Heat, carrying them early in the fourth until James checked back in midway through the period and turned what appeared a certain loss into a stunning victory.

Kris Humphries scored 29 points and MarShon Brooks had 24 for the Nets.

Hornets 75, Bobcats 67

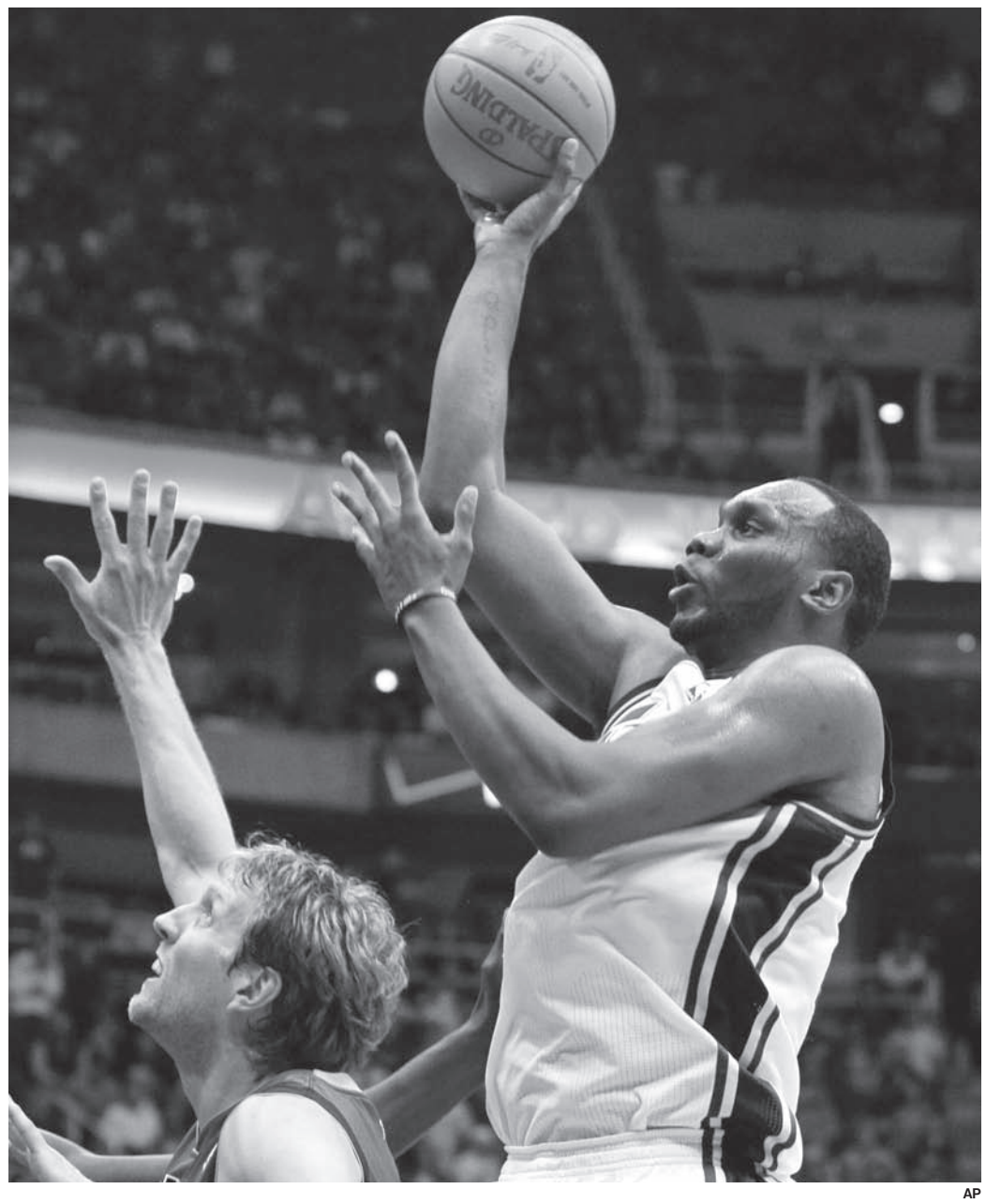
In Charlotte, North Carolina, Greivis Vasquez scored 20 points as New Orleans handed Charlotte a franchise-record 17th straight loss.

The Hornets, playing without leading scorers Eric Gordon and Chris Kaman, won despite shooting just 34 percent from the floor in the second-lowest scoring NBA game this season. Gordon was given the night off to rest, but no reason was given before the game as to why Kaman was held out of action.

Wizards 87, Bulls 84

In Chicago, Kevin Seraphin had 21 points and 13 rebounds, and John Wall scored 16 points as Washington beat Chicago.

Richard Hamilton scored 22 points to lead the Bulls, who played without stars Derrick Rose and Luol Deng. Rose was out with a sore right foot as he missed his 24th game of the season, and Deng sat out due to sore right ribs.



AP

Utah Jazz center Al Jefferson, right, goes up to score against Dallas Mavericks power forward Dirk Nowitzki (41) of Germany during triple overtime in an NBA basketball game, Monday, April 16, 2012, in Salt Lake City.

Nuggets 105, Rockets 102

In Houston, Arron Afflalo scored 26 points and Ty Lawson had 25 as Denver continued its playoff push with victory over Houston.

Al Harrington added 15 points and Andre Miller had 13 assists for the Nuggets, who swept back-to-back games with the Rockets, the team directly behind them in the Western Conference standings.

Denver began the night holding the No. 7 spot in the Western Conference, one game ahead of the Rockets. Houston was only one game ahead of Phoenix and 1 1/2 games ahead of Utah, who were both playing later Monday.

Hawks 109, Raptors 87

In Toronto, Jeff Teague had 19 points and 10 assists, and Ivan Johnson scored 21 points as Atlanta beat Toronto for the seventh time in eight games.

Joe Johnson scored 18 points and Josh Smith had 15 points and nine rebounds as the Hawks avenged Sunday's 102-86 home loss to Toronto, a game in which the Raptors never trailed.

Marvin Williams scored 16 for Atlanta and former Raptors star Tracy McGrady scored nine of his 11 points in the fourth quarter.

Pacers 111, Timberwolves 88

In Indianapolis, David West had 22 points and 10 rebounds to help Indiana win its fifth straight game.

Danny Granger scored 19 points, Paul George had 18 and Roy Hibbert added 12 points and 11 rebounds for the Pacers, who solidified their grip on the No. 3 position in the Eastern Conference standings. Indiana scored at least 100 points for the 10th time in 11 games.

Magic 113, 76ers 100

In Orlando, Florida, Ryan Anderson had 26 points and 16 rebounds, and J.J. Redick scored 18 points as Orlando held off Philadelphia.

The Magic won their second straight game and played their fifth consecutive without Dwight Howard, who is out indefinitely with a herniated disc in his back. The All-Star center has missed seven games overall with the injury and Orlando improved to 3-4 in his absence.

Suns 125, Trail Blazers 107

In Phoenix, Marcin Gortat had 20 points and 10 rebounds, and Steve Nash had 13 assists to help Phoenix cruise past Portland.

Channing Frey added 19 points for Phoenix and Jared Dudley had 18.

With their win and a victory by Denver over Houston, the Suns and Rockets have identical records.

Clippers 92, Thunder 77

In Los Angeles, Nick Young scored 19 points, Blake Griffin added 17 and Randy Foye 13 to help the playoff-bound Clippers beat Oklahoma City.

The Clippers had already clinched their first playoff berth in five years before the game began as a result of Houston's three-point loss to Denver, ending the second-longest active postseason drought in the league.

Kevin Durant led Oklahoma City with 24 points, Serge Ibaka and James Harden added 12 points each, and Russell Westbrook was held to nine as the Thunder's two-game winning streak ended.

Spurs 120, Warriors 99

In Oakland, California, Tim Duncan scored 13 points in his shortest night of work this season, and Tiago Splitter added 15 points and eight rebounds as San Antonio moved into the top spot in the Western Conference.

Gary Neal added 17 points and Manu Ginobli scored 12 points with four assists for the Spurs, winners of 17 of their last 20. San Antonio moved percentage points ahead of Oklahoma City in the race for the No. 1 seed in the West.

Manning goes to work with his new team

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—Peyton Manning is back in his element, barking out calls, throwing passes and working out with his new teammates. It sure beats watching, wondering and worrying.

He's still finding his comfort zone in Denver after spending 14 seasons in Indianapolis, but Manning is back serving as both quarterback and coach on the football field instead of pacing the sideline and wondering when his neck is going to allow him to return to the huddle.

Manning and his new teammates reported to the Broncos' headquarters Monday morning for the start of the team's offseason conditioning program. After some work in the classroom and weight room, Manning threw passes to his new receivers during some on-field work without the coaches, who aren't allowed to join them outdoors until OTAs start up in May.

"Everybody's been looking forward to this day for some time now," Manning said. "I thought it was a productive first day, but we've got a lot of work to do."

He didn't want to make any rash judgments about his receiving corps and although he said he was pleased with his first official workout since signing a five-year, $96 million deal with Denver on March 20, Manning declined to talk about his health or the progress he's made as he regains his arm strength following a series of neck operations that sidelined him for all of last season and led to his departure from Indy.

"I'm not going to get into these weekly reports. I've kind of been there and done that all fall of last year," said Manning, who is rehabbing under the direction of head athletic trainer Steve "Greek" Antonopulos and new strength and conditioning coach Luke Richesson.

"I'm enjoying being under one roof, being supervised by those two guys," Manning said.

Wide receiver Eric Decker, who has caught more passes from Manning than anyone else over the last month thanks to a series of workouts at local high schools, said the four-time MVP's passes were precise and powerful.

"I'm not his doctor, I don't know how to speak on his health, but catching balls from him, it looks like there's nothing wrong to me," Decker said. "He's throwing great balls, he's getting the work in just like we're getting the work in, knocking the rust off. I see no issues at this point."

Although he's been putting in a lot of miles finding remote high school fields to practice on, Manning said he hasn't really gotten to know his new city yet.

"It's been all business," he said. "Everybody's asking where I'm living. I've been living over here in the facility."

Rehabbing, lifting weights and studying his new playbook.

Manning said he was glad to throw the ball around at team headquarters rather than sneaking around to the local high school fields to play catch with Decker and good friend Brandon Stokley, who signed a one-year deal to return to the Broncos on Monday.

Manning, 36, has always embraced the offseason regimen, and he said he's sure he wasn't the only one who was relieved Monday when NFL teams opened their doors for the voluntary offseason conditioning programs that were scuttled last year by the league's lockout.

"I am (excited), there's no question. I think a lot of players around the NFL will tell you the lockout threw a lot of players off their routine and what they're used to," Manning said. "So, I (like) the fact that everybody's allowed to be in the facility now working out under one roof, we can throw on the field now, right next to the weight room now as opposed to going to a high school. That was what you had to do, but it's nice to be able to do everything here and have some time with the coaches, as well."

Because the coaches can't join them on the practice fields until next month, the players run the on-field portion of the program themselves, and this arrangement is perfectly suited for Manning, who will direct the installation of the Broncos' new no-huddle offense.

Manning, though, said he felt like the new kid in school.

"I think a number of us did. I was with Jacob Tamme and Joel Dreessen, Caleb (Hanie), the same way. We have some new guys. So, I'm learning as we go, as well," Manning said. "Certainly when you get out there on the field and you're throwing passes to receivers, you feel a little more comfortable there, as far as knowing what you're doing a little bit."

Decker said Manning is making everyone around him better because of his famous work ethic, and cornerback Champ Bailey said that goes for Denver's defense, too.

Bailey sent Manning numerous texts during the quarterback's whirlwind free agency tour pleading with him to come to Denver.

"Why? Because he's an amazing player and his leadership alone is bar none the best in the league," Bailey said. "You need a guy like that on your team, and where I want to go, what I want to do toward the end of my career is win a championship and I feel like he gives us the best chance."

Verlander pitches Tigers to win over Royals

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP)—Justin Verlander beat Kansas City once again, surviving a shaky ninth inning Monday to deliver the Detroit Tigers a 3-2 victory over the Royals.

Austin Jackson hit a leadoff homer and Brandon Inge added a two-run shot in the fifth for the Tigers, giving their reigning American League Cy Young pitching award winner enough support when things got tight.

Verlander (1-1) allowed an RBI single by Humberto Quintero with two outs in the ninth, and then loaded the bases when he walked Mitch Maier and plunked Alcides Escobar on the elbow. Verlander came back to strike out Alex Gordon looking, sending the Royals to their fifth consecutive loss.

Detroit manager Jim Leyland had closer Jose Valverde warming up in the ninth, but he decided to stick with the AL MVP even after things got tense. Verlander ended up throwing 131 pitches while improving to 14-2 in his career against the Royals.

AP

Detroit Tigers starting pitcher Justin Verlander (35, right) is congratulated by teammate Alex Avila after the ninth inning of their 3-2 win over the Kansas City Royals in a baseball game Monday, April 16, 2012 in Kansas City, Mo.

Orioles 10, White Sox 4, 10 innings

In Chicago, Matt Wieters homered twice, including a 10th-inning grand slam, lifting Baltimore to a come-from-behind win over Chicago.

The White Sox took a 4-1 lead into the eighth, but Baltimore hit three solo homers against a pair of relievers to send the game into extra innings.

Chicago reliever Zach Stewart (0-1) allowed six runs in the 10th, five unearned.

Wieters went deep off Jesse Crain in the eighth to make it 4-2. Nolan Reimold and Adam Jones homered off rookie closer Hector Santiago in the ninth to tie it.

Angels 6, Athletics 0

In Anaheim, California, Kendrys Morales hit his first homer in nearly two years and drove in four runs, and Jered Weaver recorded his 1,000th career strikeout while pitching five-hit ball into the seventh inning of Los Angeles' victory over Oakland.

Morales followed his three-run homer in the first inning with an eighth-inning double to score Albert Pujols, who went 2 for 4 with a double. Pujols still hasn't homered in 10 games with the Angels, but his new cleanup hitter provided plenty of power as Los Angeles opened a weeklong homestand with just its second win in six games.

Morales staked Weaver (2-0) to a healthy lead, and the AL Cy Young runner-up retired his first 11 batters.

Weaver struck out six, rolling his career total into quadruple digits when he fanned Josh Reddick in the sixth inning.

Rays 1, Red Sox 0

In Boston, James Shields allowed four hits in 8 1-3 innings as Tampa Bay beat Boston Red to avoid a four-game sweep.

The only run came when Daniel Bard (0-2) walked Evan Longoria on four pitches with the bases loaded in the seventh.

Shields (2-0) led the majors with 11 complete games last year and had a chance for another until he walked Dustin Pedroia with one out in the ninth. Fernando Rodney retired the next two batters for his fourth save in four chances.

Joe Maddon got his 500th win as a manager, all with Tampa Bay, as the Rays stopped a four-game losing streak.

Twins 7, Yankees 3

In New York, Carl Pavano quieted an unfriendly Yankee Stadium crowd with seven solid innings, and Justin Morneau played in the field for the first time this season and hit a long homer as Minnesota earned a rare victory in New York.

Joe Mauer had three hits, including two doubles, and every position player had a hit in a tweaked Minnesota lineup. Josh Willingham batted fourth for the first time this season and was one of seven Twins to drive in a run.

Minnesota won for just the sixth time in 34 regular-season games in the Bronx since Ron Gardenhire took over as manager in 2002.

Yankees fans were relentless with their boos when Pavano was introduced before the game.

Nationals 6, Astros 3

In Washington, Stephen Strasburg pitched six innings for his second win of the season to lead the Washington Nationals to victory over the Houston Astros.

Strasburg looked nearly unhittable for five innings, allowing just three singles, but the Astros got to him in the sixth for two runs and three hits.

Strasburg (2-0) walked one and struck out five. He hasn't allowed a home run in 50 1-3 innings — since Aug. 15, 2010.

Steve Lombardozzi had three singles and a two-run double in the sixth off Kyle Weiland (0-2) that gave Washington a 4-2 lead. Ryan Zimmerman followed with a two-run single.

Mets 6, Braves 1

In Atlanta, Ike Davis hit a tie-breaking three-run homer and Dillon Gee pitched four-hit ball over seven innings as New York downed Atlanta.

The Mets snapped Atlanta's five-game winning streak and kept up their early dominance in the NL East rivalry, winning again after a three-game sweep of the Braves in New York to start the season.

With the game tied at 1 in the sixth, Atlanta intentionally walked hot-hitting David Wright with two outs to get to Davis—a move that certainly made sense, given the first baseman was batting just .118. The strategy backfired when Tommy Hanson (1-2) hung a 2-2 pitch and Davis drove it into the right-field seats.

Gee (1-1) was never in much trouble. Atlanta put together a couple of hits and a walk in the second, leading to its only run on Jack Wilson's RBI groundout.

Padres 7, Rockies 1

In Denver, Cory Luebke threw seven efficient innings and Chase Headley equaled a team record with three doubles, helping San Diego beat Colorado and end a four-game losing streak.

Luebke (1-1) breezed through the Rockies lineup on a brisk night, giving up six hits and one run.

Lately, the Padres have made themselves quite at home at Coors Field, winning seven of their past nine in the hitter friendly park. They did a bulk of their damage with doubles, hitting seven for the game.

Jeremy Guthrie (1-1) was feeling under the weather, but gave it a go despite a sore throat.

Diamondbacks 5, Pirates 1

In Phoenix, Chris Young had three hits, including his team-best fifth home run, and Joe Saunders pitched seven strong innings to help lead Arizona past Pittsburgh.

Saunders (1-0) allowed a run on six hits with two walks and five strikeouts.

Aaron Hill and Gerardo Parra also homered for the Diamondbacks, who have won two straight. Arizona is 25-4 in its last 29 home games.

Neil Walker drove in the run for the Pirates, who have lost six of seven. Pittsburgh has scored two runs or fewer in seven of 10 games this season.

Phillies 5, Giants 2

In San Francisco, Roy Halladay outlasted Tim Lincecum in a matchup of two-time Cy Young pitching award winners as Philadelphia beat San Francisco.

Halladay (3-0) struck out six and allowed seven hits in eight innings on a crisp and cool spring night along the bay. He also had an RBI single in a rematch of aces from the 2010 NL championship series.

Laynce Nix's two-run double highlighted a four-run first off Lincecum (0-2) that produced all the power Philadelphia needed. The Phillies chased San Francisco's shaggy-haired and struggling right-hander after he gave up five runs and eight hits in six innings.

Valentine criticizes Youkilis, then apologizes

BOSTON (AP)—Kevin Youkilis' teammates came to his defense Monday after Red Sox manager Bobby Valentine questioned his commitment to the game and then apologized to his third baseman.

During an interview aired Sunday night on WHDH-TV, Valentine said he didn't think Youkilis was "as physically or emotionally into the game."

That drew a sharp response from Dustin Pedroia before Monday's 1-0 loss to the Tampa Bay Rays.

"I know he plays as hard as anybody I've ever seen in my life. I have his back and his teammates have his back," the second baseman said.

After the game, first baseman Adrian Gonzalez also supported his teammate.

"All you can do is tell Youk we love him. All it says is we have each others' backs," he said. "We're pulling for each other on the field and in the clubhouse. We've got a strong bond."

On Monday morning, Valentine said he apologized when Youkilis came into his office and asked for an explanation.

"I don't know if he accepted my apology," Valentine said. "It was sincere."

Youkilis had a poor spring training and is batting .200 (6 for 30), but Valentine said his comments weren't aimed at motivating him. After a 2-for-20 start, he was 4 for 10 in the first three games against the Tampa Bay Rays. He missed Monday's series finale because of a minor groin injury.

"I'm more confused than anything," Youkilis said before the game. "Everybody knows I go out and play the game as hard as I can."

If Valentine's intent was to have Youkilis' teammates rally around him, it may have worked.

"I really don't know what Bobby's trying to do, but that's not the way we go about our stuff around here," Pedroia said. "He'll figure that out. The whole team is behind Youk."

Asked if Valentine was trying to motivate Youkilis, Pedroia said, "maybe that works in Japan"—where Valentine used to manage.

The manager said after the game that he spoke to Pedroia and "he's cool. He says he gets it."

Valentine took over on Dec. 1 for the more laid-back Terry Francona, who led the Red Sox to two World Series championships in eight seasons.

Valentine said that in the interview he was just answering a question about how Youkilis may be feeling during early season struggles.

"I don't think he's as physically or emotionally into the game as he has been in the past for some reason," he said in the interview before Boston's 13-5 win on Sunday. "But (on Saturday) it seemed, you know, he's seeing the ball well, got those two walks, got his on-base percentage up higher than his batting average, which is always a good thing, and he'll move on from there."

On Monday, Valentine said, "I should have been more specific. Physical is about your swing, emotional is about not being happy when he doesn't hit a ball off the wall."

Youkilis hit a career-low .258 last season, when he was limited to 112 games by several injuries. Going into this season, his ninth with the Red Sox, he was batting .289 with 129 homers and 550 RBIs.

He said he talked Monday with Valentine about the manager's comments but gave no details. Youkilis said he doesn't think his passionate approach to the game has changed.

"I go out and just play the game. It doesn't matter one way or another. There's things that happened over the years with a lot of different things in baseball," he said. "For me it's not an issue."

Valentine said he doesn't want Youkilis to think "I was jabbing at him."

"I'd be surprised if Kevin didn't know I was totally behind him," he said. "We're big boys. I think he'll get it. If not, I'll talk to him a lot more."

Hoe Lokahi Canoe Club fundraiser on April 28

The Hoe Lokahi Canoe Club is gearing up for its 2012 outrigger season and will be hosting its Cinco De Mayo-Happy Hour fundraiser event beachside at the Hyatt Regency Saipan on April 28 starting at 6pm.

In addition to food and beverages at discounted prices, the event will also feature live music and a raffle drawing. Tickets cost $10 and include one free drink.

The Hoe Lokahi Cano Club is a non-profit organization created back in 2010 that competed in the 2011 Micronesian Cup held on Guam.

"Hoe lokahi" is a Hawaiian term that translates into "paddle in harmony."

The club is currently seeking new individuals that are interested in incorporating paddling into their lifestyle, whether they are a novice or are experienced in the sport.

"Outrigger paddling is an excellent workout that is both physically and mentally challenging. If you are looking to include a new exercise into your routine, love the ocean or just want to meet new people, this is the perfect opportunity," offered the group's public relations committee chair Leilani Nielsen.

The Hoe Lokahi club is currently accepting new members. Interested participants are welcome to stop by their weekly practice session held at the Saipan World Resort beach; they practice at 5pm on Monday and Wednesday evenings and at 7:30am on Saturday mornings.

The Hoe Lokahi 2012 race season starts on May 12 with its men and women's mixed open 500-meter and 1,000-m sprints.

Then on June 16 and July 21's events will feature men and women's 500-m and 1500-m sprints, in addition to its junior boys and girls' 500-m and 1000-m races.

Aug. 18 and 19 and Sept. 29 and 30 mark the dates for the group's men and women's sprint series as well the a men's 10-kilometer and women's 8-km open distance events.

The 2012 Micronesian Cup then rounds out the season on Oct. 27 and 28.

For more information, email Hoe Lokahi's Leilani Nielsen at heavymana@gmail.com. ***(Walter Cepeda Sutherland)***

SSC

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SSC had a sweep with Lennosuke Suzuki ranked No. 1 with 60 points, followed by teammates Taiga Sato (53) and Rinto Takahashi (38). Lennosuke ruled the200m freestyle (3:03.45), 50m butterfly (46.43 seconds), 100m backstroke (1:39.06), 200m individual medley, and 100m breaststroke (1:51.26) and was third in the 50m breaststroke (52.42 seconds).

In the girls 9 to 10, Neveah Anderson of Guam's Manukai Athletics Club collected 68 points to beat fellow Guam swimmers Kensleigh Wehut (37) and Madison Guinzu (34) of the Andersen Marlins. Anderson reigned supreme in the 50m backstroke (48.26 seconds), 50m (54.15 seconds) and 100m breaststroke (1:57.06), and 50m butterfly (52.97seconds) and was runner-up in the 200m IM (3:50.65) and 100m backstroke (1:48.61).

Another Manukai swimmer, Danielle Atoigue, won in the girls 11 to 12 age group, while SSC's own, Kento Akimaru took the boys top honors against Andersen Marlins' Ayden Capps (30) and Tsunami Saipan's Kaito Yanai (27). Kento gained 45 points after winning the 50m (41.39 seconds) and 100m breaststroke (1:34.49), 50m freestyle (31.20 seconds), 50m butterfly (33.95 seconds), and 800m freestyle (10:39.60).

Atoigue triumphed in the 50m (54.15 seconds) and 100m breaststroke (1:42.77), 50m (32.98 seconds), 100m (1:13.14), and 200m freestyle (2:39.44), and 200m IM (3:05.97) to get 72 points and down teammate Kate Lee McCormic (61) and Andersen Marlins Maddy Black (45).

In the 13 to 14 age group, Tsunami Saipan and Manukai split honors with Takumi Sugie winning for the former and Taloani Atoigue for the latter. Sugie, who gathered 27 points to beat teammate Min Seok Yoo, earned points in the 50m backstroke (35.51 seconds), 50m freestyle (29.27 seconds), and 200m medley relay. Taloani Atoigue prevailed in the 100m butterfly (1:34.39), 200m IM (3:21.93) and 50m breaststroke (46.41 seconds), placed third in the 50m freestyle (39.97 seconds) and 50 butterfly (39.43 seconds), and fourth in the 50m freestyle (34.86 seconds).

In the 15-and-above division, Tsunami Saipan swept the boys division with Shigeki Tenorio and Kensuke Kimura tied for first and Kaisei Toda in second place, while Andersen's Anna Drecher won the girls category with her 63 points, edging Manukai's Hee Jung Kang (60) and Kaitlin Miller (59).

Tenorio and Kimura collected 27 points each, while Toda had 7 points. Tenorio ruled the 100m breaststroke (1:16.07) and 100m freestyle (1:03.72) and raced in the 200m medley relay, while Kimura placed first in the 200m backstroke (2:20.88) and 200m IM (2:19.91) and was also in the medley relay squad.

YANKEES

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fourth with a base hit and stole second and third base before swiping the plate to put his team back in the driver's seat.

Yankees pitcher Joshua Jones did a good job handling the rest of the Angels lineup and received some welcome help from his teammates to overcome the defending champions.

Yankees' David and Greg Camacho delivered a pair of clutch RBI singles to reclaim control, 3-2, in the bottom of the fifth inning.

Angels leadoff man Marvin Kaipat reached off an error and scored off a suicide steal in the top of the sixth, but Yankees' Jones had enough left in the tank to secure the win.

Chris Camacho provided a pair of insurance runs with a base smash in the bottom of the eighth inning

Reyes batted 3-for-4 and was the only player to get a hit off Yankees ace Jones, who went the distance and gave up two earned runs and a pair of walks with 20 strikeouts. Yankees' Chris Camacho batted 2-for-3 with three RBIs and a hit-by-pitch.

Brewers 6, O'lAces 5

The Brewers sprinkled a run in the first, third, and sixth innings before Ol'Aces hit the board.

Brewers' Manny Sablan doubled home Darren Pua in the opening frame. Pua came around again in the third off an error and Mike Pangelinan drove in Roy Celis with a base knock in the sixth inning.

After coming up empty six times in a row, Ol'Aces somehow managed to seize the lead, 4-3, in the top of the seventh inning off three hits and a couple of errors.

Juan Iguel doubled and then reached home off an error. Tyrone Omar and Mike Iguel bagged RBI singles and Charlie Wabol dinked in another run.

After the uprising, the Brewers called Vince Cepeda to the mound to close the game, but Ol'Aces leadoff man Jesus Iguel answered with an RBI base rip that provided a 5-3 edge in the top of the eighth.

Brewers' Byron Kaipat drove in Roy Celis to pull the crew to within a run, 4-5, heading into the last inning.

Ol'Aces closer Juan Maratita was just one away and plunked the ninth batter.

He served up another bean ball and a base hit that loaded the bases before Roy Celis stepped in and pulled around on a walk-off two-RBI base smash.

MAN

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X-clusisve (3-3), 6 Pack (2-2), Familia (2-4), Talu Fahn (1-6), and Managaha (0-5) make up the rest of the men's field.

Man Amigos 15, Warriors 12

Man Amigos laid down an 11-run jumpstart in the bottom of the first inning, but the Warriors came with paint on their faces and grinded out a valiant comeback attempt in the next three innings.

The Warriors cracked out seven hits for five runs in the second inning.

Man Amigos were then gifted a run in return in the bottom frame off an error and both teams came up empty in the third inning.

The Warriors briefly tied the game at 12-all in with seven runs in the top of the fourth off six hits. MacGary Scaliem Jr and Josh Garde recorded RBI base hits and Ton Pangelinan launched a two-run homer.

However, Man Amigos' top of the order came through in the clutch for three runs off a go-ahead RBI base rip by Roy Celis and a two-run long ball by Jerry Ayuyu.

Man Amigos tapped Vinnie Sablan to the mound in relief for at the start of the fifth inning and he did a good job helping the group pull it together out on the field in the last two innings.

Eleven of Man Amigos' 19 hits came in the first inning surge.

Ur Balls 18, Manelos 8

Manelos' Jun Camacho and Derek Abraham answered a three-run home run by Ur Balls' Audie Maratta in the top of the second inning with a pair of long balls, but Ur Balls countered with three more runs in the bottom frame. Maratita and Eugene Arriola bagged RBI singles and the other run came off an error.

The count shifted to 10-4 in the third inning as Ur Balls brought four runs to the plate off a sacrifice fly and a three-run blast by Kyle Kaipat.

Ur Balls' Arriola and Marvin Kapat lifted solo shots to maintain the six-run margin in the fourth inning as the crew extended its lead to eight runs, 16-8, off five more hits in the fifth to secure the victory; Manelos' went 1-2-3 in the finals stand.

Ur Balls' Oliver Secharmidal batted 4-for-4 with four runs and an RBI.

Saipal 19, G-Ballers 8

LuisNgiraikelau jacked a three-run homer in the top of the second inning to put Saipal in front, 3-2, and added three more runs in the third with a pair of lift offs by Eli Illo (two runs) and Jordan Hayes.

However, G-Ballers pulled within a run, 5-6, in the bottom frame with a three-run homer by Jun Salas in the bottom frame.

Saipal doubled them up in the fourth innings with four runs off four hits and then trotted away, 17-5, in the top of the fifth off another seven hits.

G-Ballers mustered only three runs in to close the fifth before puttering out. Saipal's Hayes left the yard for a two-run cherry in the top of the sixth inning.

Saipal's Hayes, Efraim, and Greg Iskawa all batted 4-for-4.

Natibu 17, Berdax 2

Berdax's first two batters reached and scored to start the game, but Natibu was quick to break up the party and shut them down for the remainder of the contest.

At the plate in the bottom half of the first, Natibu's cleanup man Jerome Delos Santos powered a shot over the fence for three runs and his teammate B.J. Sablan curtain called it with another three-run homer to start the second inning; three other runs came home in the second off errors and a sacrifice fly by J.R. Suel.

Natibu then trudged ahead, 13-2, in the third inning off a Delos Santos solo shot, a sacrifice fly from Victor Salas, and RBI singles by B.J. Sablan and Eric Kani.

Natibu added four runs in the fourth and closed up early.

OVER

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the Top 3 from each zone will march into the championship, while the Top 3 from all zones combined will take the remaining slots

Besides the 200m, other qualifying events held in Week 1 were the boys and girls U8, 10, and U12 400m run and softball throw.

In the boys U8 200m qualifier, 40 competed with Koblerville's Christopher Hans posting the best qualifying time of 36.14 seconds. In the girls U8, Zone A and Dandan Elementary School's Neiyahni Benavente logged the fastest time (37.82 seconds) among 22 participants.

In the 400m qualifier, Hans also finished on top with his 1:31.11, beating 25 other runners, while the girls division drew seven entries with Zone B and Kagman Elementary School's Aldin Castro clocking in at 1:49.14, just .10 of a second ahead of Barbara Peteru of Zone A's Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School.

In the softball throw, 35 competed in the boys qualifier with Kagman's Jesstin Laniyo topping the field with his 28.83m. Sharmaine Francisco of WSR submitted 19.65m to lead 15 other students.

In the girls U10 age group, WSR's Magthalina Sebuu led 27 others in the 200m run with her time of 35.23 seconds. In the 400m, 47 competed in the boys qualifier with Dandan's Matthew Kapileo (1:08.30) ruling the field. In the girls division, Kagman's Maureen Mendiola recorded 1:44.00 to beat 19 other runners. In the softball throw that lured 41 in the boys and 21 in the girls, Koblerville's Rikko Lizama (38m) and Leslie Babauta (29.6m) topped their respective divisions.

In the boys U12 200m qualifying races, Kapileo bested 45 other entries with his 29.28 seconds, while the girls top qualifier among 30 runners was Koblerville's Virginia Imperial (31.71 seconds).

For the 400m qualifiers, Dandan had a sweep with J.J. Jones ruling the boys 41-runner field with his 1:07.42 and Janelle Reyes reigning among 17 entries with her time of 1:18.24.

Garapan Elementary School and Tanapag shared top honors in the softball throw with Aiferson Atan (53.1m) defeating 44 other entries in the boys division and Eritana Dela Cruz (33m) leading 17 others in the girls category.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	36	25	.590	—
New York	31	29	.517	4 1/2
Philadelphia	31	29	.517	4 1/2
New Jersey	22	40	.355	14 1/2
Toronto	22	40	.355	14 1/2

Southeast Division

y-Miami	43	17	.717	—
x-Atlanta	36	25	.590	7 1/2
x-Orlando	36	25	.590	7 1/2
Washington	15	46	.246	28 1/2
Charlotte	7	53	.117	36

Central Division

y-Chicago	46	15	.754	—
x-Indiana	39	22	.639	7
Milwaukee	29	31	.483	16 1/2
Detroit	22	38	.367	23 1/2
Cleveland	20	39	.339	25

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

y-San Antonio	43	16	.729	—
Memphis	35	25	.583	8 1/2
Dallas	34	28	.548	10 1/2
Houston	32	29	.525	12
New Orleans	19	42	.311	25

Northwest Division

y-Oklahoma City	44	17	.721	—
Denver	34	27	.557	10
Utah	32	30	.516	12 1/2
Portland	28	34	.452	16 1/2
Minnesota	25	37	.403	19 1/2

Pacific Division

x-L.A. Lakers	39	22	.639	—
x-L.A. Clippers	38	23	.623	1
Phoenix	32	29	.525	7
Golden State	22	38	.367	16 1/2
Sacramento	20	41	.328	19

x-clinched playoff spot
y-clinched division

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	6	4	.600	—
Toronto	5	4	.556	1/2
New York	5	5	.500	1
Tampa Bay	5	5	.500	1
Boston	4	6	.400	2

Central Division

Detroit	7	3	.700	—
Chicago	5	4	.556	1 1/2
Cleveland	4	4	.500	2
Kansas City	3	7	.300	4
Minnesota	3	7	.300	4

West Division

Texas	8	2	.800	—
Seattle	6	5	.545	2 1/2
Los Angeles	4	6	.400	4
Oakland	4	7	.364	4 1/2

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Washington	8	3	.727	—
New York	7	3	.700	1/2
Atlanta	5	5	.500	2 1/2
Philadelphia	5	5	.500	2 1/2
Miami	4	6	.400	3 1/2

Central Division

St. Louis	7	3	.700	—
Cincinnati	4	6	.400	3
Houston	4	6	.400	3
Milwaukee	4	6	.400	3
Chicago	3	7	.300	4
Pittsburgh	3	7	.300	4

West Division

Los Angeles	9	1	.900	—
Arizona	7	3	.700	2
Colorado	4	6	.400	5
San Francisco	4	6	.400	5
San Diego	3	8	.273	6 1/2

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2012 SSC International Invitational Meet

Photos By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Swimmers get ready for the 50m freestyle race in the 2012 SSC International Invitational Meet held last Saturday at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Swimmers plunge into the pool.

Tsunami Saipan's Kensuke Kimura does the butterfly leg of the 200m individual medley race.

Two female swimmers race in the 50m freestyle event.

Two Manukai Athletic Club swimmers race in the 50m breaststroke.

SSC's Kento Akimaru competes in the 50m breaststroke race.

From left, Tsunami Saipan's Ryuto Yanai, SSC's Kento Akimaru, and SSC coach Michael Villagomez wait for the start of the 50m freestyle race.

An Andersen Marlins swimmer breathes during the 50m freestyle race.

Two swimmers splash water on their faces before plunging into the pool.

Tsunami Saipan's Miku Tammy starts the backstroke leg of the 200m individual medley race.

Jazz outlast Nowitzki, Mavericks in 3OT
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Sports

Verlander pitches Tigers to win over Royals
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SSC swimmers deliver at Invitational

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
A Saipan Swim Club swimmer competes in the 200m individual medley race during last Saturday's Invitational meet at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Swim Club's bets ruled four age groups in the 2012 SSC International Invitational Meet held last weekend at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

The host's topped both the girls and boys U8 division with Conatsu Kaga and Taiyo Akimaru besting their respective fields and earning 36 and 27 points. Points were awarded to swimmers based on how they placed in each race.

Conatsu defeated younger sister, Coume (24 points) and another SSC swimmer Maria Gregorie (21). The older Kaga finished first in the 50m backstroke (1:01.62), 50m breaststroke (1:10.31), and 50m freestyle (48.52 seconds), and then swam in the 200m freestyle relay to gain the top spot in the girls U8 division.

In the boys U8, Akimaru tied Tsunami's Ryuto Yanai, while the former's teammate, Jinnosuke Suzuki, finished second with 24 points. The 6-year-old Akimaru placed first in the 50m backstroke (58.11 seconds) and 50m butterfly (1:12.03) and fifth in the 50m freestyle (52.09 seconds), and also joined the 200m freestyle relay. The 8-year-old Yanai was first in the 50m (33.04 seconds), 100m (1:15.69), and 200m freestyle (2:34.63), to force a tie for first.

In the boys 9 to 10 age group,

See SSC on Page 26

Yankees, Brewers grind out wins

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Stevedore Northern Yankees held it together and overcame defending champion St. Michael's Medical Response Angels (2-1), 5-3, in Monday's Saipan Major League matchup at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

In addition, the Tan Holdings' Brewers pulled out a last inning, 6-5, rally thanks to a two-RBI walk off smash by Roy Celis to steal a win from Ol'Aces (1-1) last Wednesday.

The season continues tonight at 6:30pm on Tan Ko Field with the Masters (0-1) taking on the D-9ers (0-1). The IP&E Fielders (1-2) make up the rest of the field.

Yankees 5, Angels 3

Angels' John Reyes broke the ice in the first inning with a double and scored off a wild pitch, but the Yankees knotted it back at 1-apiece in the bottom of the second off an RBI single by Chris Camacho.

After a quiet third inning, Angels' Reyes led off the

See YANKEES on Page 26

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
Northern Yankees' Greg Camacho awaits a pitch in Monday's SML matchup against the Angels held at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Man Amigos still perfect, nip Warriors

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

Man Amigos started slow but got it done in the clutch to overcome the Warriors, 15-12, in Monday's Chamolinian Softball Association 2012 Budweiser Slow-Pitch Softball League men's division matchup held at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

With the win Man Amigos kept its undefeated streak at 5-0, while the Warriors absorbed its fourth loss in five games.

In last Wednesday's men's pairings, Ur Balls (4-1) defeated Manelos (3-2), 18-9; Saipal (3-4) downed the G-Ballers (2-4), 19-8; and co-division leader Natibu (6-0) crushed Berdax (3-3), 19-2.

Gagu Eyez (4-2), Elias (3-1),

See MAN on Page 26

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
Man Amigos' James Fleming hunts down a fly ball in Monday's CSA men's division pairing against the Warriors held at the Capitol Hill Ballfield.

Over 300 join Week 2 of All Schools qualifier

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The qualifiers for the 2012 McDonald's 2012 PSS/McDonald's All Schools Championship continued to lure a lot of students, as over 300 showed up in last week's elementary division competitions at the Oleai Sports Complex.

In the boys U10 200m qualifier alone, 54 students from the three school zones joined the race with Sebastien Manata of Zone A's William S. Reyes Elementary School recording the fastest qualifying time at 33.24 seconds. Four other runners completed the 200m sprint under the 34-second mark. The list includes Zone C and Koblerville's KC Figuera (33.36 seconds), Jared Reyes (33.53 seconds), and Henry Fleming (33.60 seconds), and WSR's Glenn Matalog (34.40 seconds).

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Student-athletes watch the boys U10 200m qualifying run while waiting for their turn to race at the Oleai Sports Complex track oval last week.

Only the Top 2 finishers for the sprints (60m, 100m, 200m), in each zone will qualify for the All Schools Championship set from May 17 to 19. Then the rest of the times from all zones will be collected with the Top 2 earning entries to the three-day meet. In the throwing events (javelin, softball, and shotput),